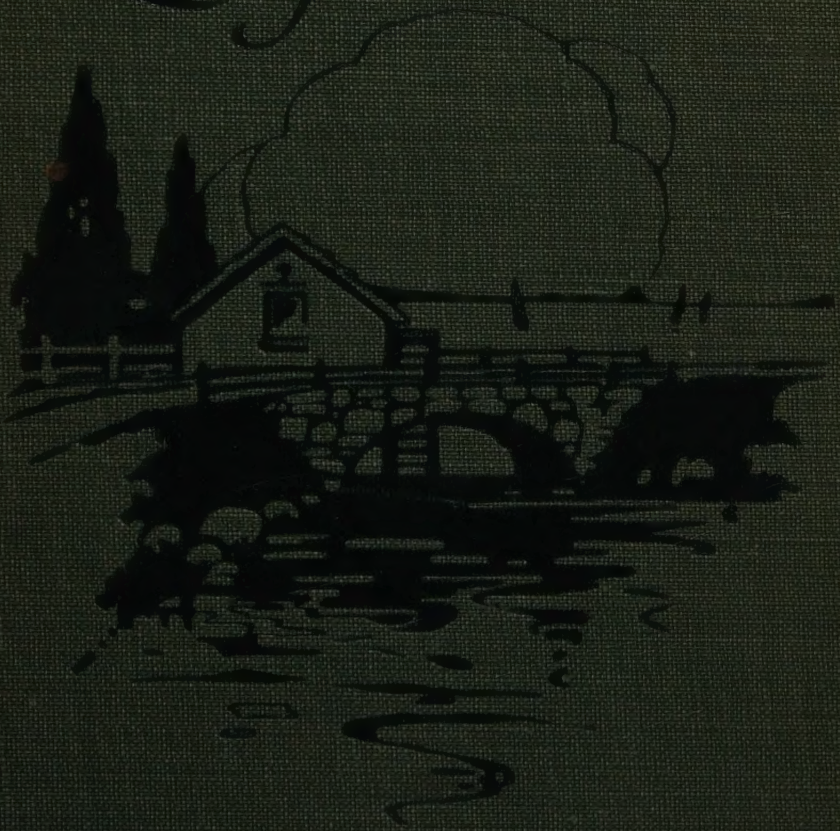
Loafing Down Long Island



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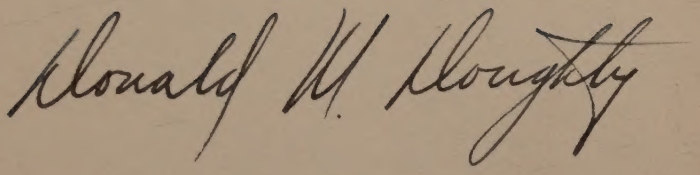
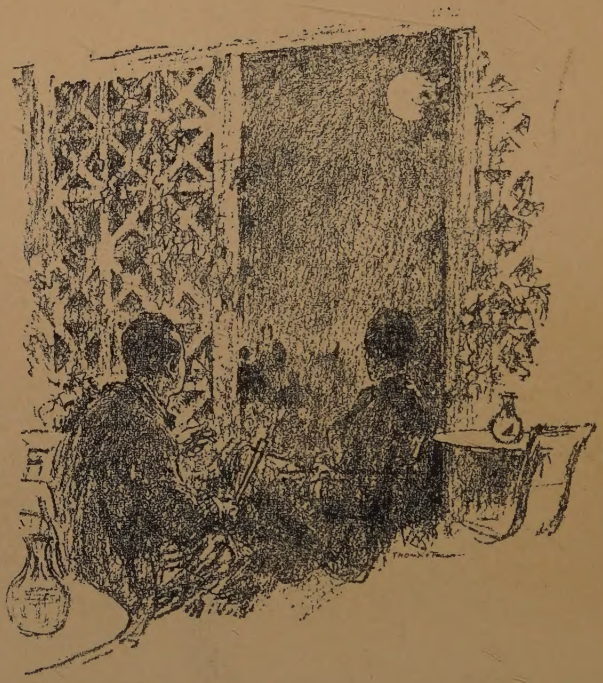


LOAFING DOWN LONG ISLAND



"You felt as if you were
somewhere in France."

LOAFING DOWN LONG ISLAND

BY

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

WITH DRAWINGS BY
THOMAS FOGARTY

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TO

JIM, ALEC, PEB, GORDON
and ERNEST
COMPANIONS ALONG THE WAY

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LOAFING DOWN LONG ISLAND

LOAFING DOWN LONG ISLAND

CHAPTER I

ON THE DIFFICULTIES OF WALKING

WHEN I speak of the difficulties of walking, I do not refer to the infirmities of age, to flat feet, or to avoirdupois. Not at all. I mean that it is hard indeed in these rushing times to go afoot, even on the most distant by-roads, without being considered eccentric. People stare at you as though you were some kind of freak or criminal. They cast suspicious glances your way, never dreaming that perhaps you prefer your own feet as a means of pleasant locomotion.

I asked a certain friend if he would not accompany me on my weekly jaunts down Long

Island. I could not arrange to go for one lengthy stay, and neither could he, I knew; so I thought the next best thing was to do it by piecemeal rather than not at all, and I planned to save time by walking a certain distance, following a road map, return by train on Monday mornings, and then take a train out again to the spot where I had left off the previous week. That seemed practical, novel, yet simple and well worth while. To live with a Blue Bird at one's door, and never know it, seems to me, as it seemed to Maeterlinck, the height of folly. I would discover the Blue Bird that was so happily mine, and hear its song on rosy summer mornings, three and even four days at a time, or perish in the attempt.

Well, my friend turned to me and instantly said:

"My car is out of order."

"But I did not mean to go in a car," I as quickly answered.

"Why," he replied, looking at me as though I had gone quite mad, "how else would we go?"

"On foot," I bravely made answer, yet re-

Queensboro Bridge

alizing that this confirmed New-Yorker would never think the same of me again. And it was so. I shall not forget, if I live a hundred years, his final disgusted glance. If anything further was needed to crush me utterly, I do not know what it could be.

But one's friends are not the only difficulty that stand in the way of a loitering gait. I found, fortunately, just the right companion for my first journey, and when I told a few young college fellows of my plan, fellows who were free for the summer, they asked if they, also, could n't be booked up for certain Thursdays until Monday; and before I knew it, I had a line of applications, as though I were handing out coupons instead of the possibility of aching feet and perspiring brows.

On the first day when we fared forth—it was with a friend named Jim—we had no sooner started to cross the great Queensboro' Bridge, which hangs like a giant harp over the East River, drawing Long Island into a closer brotherhood with New York, than we had offers of lifts from

total strangers. Yet they say Manhattan is a cold city! We never found it so, at least not on that wonderful July evening when we started out with scrip and staff; for we had decided that as we were going to do so old-fashioned a thing as walk, we would carry old-fashioned paraphernalia, called by pleasant, old-fashioned names. Bundle and cane ill comported with so quiet a pilgrimage as ours was to be. We would imagine ourselves travelers in Merrie Old England in a season now sadly gone. We would wear old clothes, and take not one article with us that we did not actually need. No burdens for our city-tired backs; only the happy little necessary impedimenta, such as a toothbrush, a razor, a comb, an extra shirt or two, and the one tie we wore. And of course a book. I chose Hazlitt's "Table Talk," Jim took George Moore's "Avowals," all the spiritual food we needed.

It takes no little courage to walk over a bridge that leads out of crowded Manhattan. Not that you want to stay in the thundering city; but this is a dangerous way to get out of it alive. You

feel like an ant, or like one of those infinitesimal figures in a picture which gives a bird's-eye view of "our village." To discover your own lack of importance in a busy, whirling world, I would prescribe the perils of walking in and immediately around New York. Never does one feel so small, so absolutely worm-like. If you wish to preserve your life, your day is one long series of dodges. Pedestrians are not popular with motorists, and virtually every one is a motorist nowadays. If you walk up the Rialto of a morning, you are convinced that every one on earth wishes to become, or is, an actor. If you edit a popular magazine, you know that every one has literary ambitions. But if you walk over Queensboro' Bridge or any of the other gateways that lead out into the country, you are certain that there is not a human being except yourself who does not own a car.

Where do they come from, these gorgeous and humble machines? And whither are they going? How many homes have been mortgaged in order that Henry and Mary may take a trip each week-

end? What necessities of life have been relinquished so that the whole family may speed to the seashore at the first touch of warm weather? It is an exhilarating, healthful pastime, but I have only one friend who motors to my liking—that is, at the rate of twenty miles an hour. My other acquaintances employ chauffeurs who suffer from the great American disease, speed, and they are whizzed here and there, often against their wills, I grant you, and they expect me to care for this abominable way of traveling. The hillsides rush by; you see nothing, you hear nothing save the voice of the siren, and you arrive at your destination a physical and mental wreck, with eyes that sting and ears that hum. No sooner is your body normally adjusted than luncheon is over, and you are told to get back into the car that you may all rush madly to the next town. There is a strange and inexplicable desire in every chauffeur I have ever seen to overtake the machine just ahead of him. Every turn reveals a line of motors dashing, as yours is, to Heaven knows where; and if you toot your horn and pass one

triumphantly, there is, as always in life, another victory to be won the instant you overcome the immediate obstacle. Why not sit back and let the other fellow pass you? But no one will in America. It seems to be a long, delirious race for precedence, and motoring, instead of being the delight it should be, has become a nightmare to me. One of these days I am going to have a car of my own, run it myself, and go where and when I please; for no one loves motoring more than I when it is really motoring and not a sudden madness. That is why, on this occasion, I preferred the jog-trot afoot; and that is why Jim and I marched forth on a certain day, with minds free from tire troubles, and no intention of getting anywhere in particular until it suited our royal convenience. We had thoroughly made up our minds on that. We would lunch or sup where it suited our whim, and we would n't look at our watches, but would seek to allay our hunger only when we felt healthily hungry. And we knew we would sleep all the better for so real a spirit of freedom.

That first afternoon we walked to Long Island City over the bridge, for we wanted the thrill of getting out of town on foot, not through the more comfortable process of a train or a motor. Besides, it would savor somewhat of cheating, if we started out on a walking tour seated in a commuter's coach. Yet it was not always our intention to walk. We made up our minds that sometimes we would steal rides, or beg for them, or take a train over an uninteresting part of the country. And if I could locate my slow-driving friend this summer, I intended to ask him to loaf with me in his car sometime.

There is one charming thing about New York: you can go anywhere and dress as you please and attract not the slightest attention. Our knickerbockers and a duffle-bag were nothing to anybody; neither was the Japanese staff I carried, which some friends had just brought to me from the land of Nippon. People are too preoccupied to give you even a cursory glance.

We knew there was apt to be nothing at all interesting just over the bridge; for we had mo-

"But we spurned all such advances, kindly as they were meant"

tored that way too frequently, and Long Island City, I was well aware, was nothing to see. It was like a poor relative of the metropolis, a person that a rich man paid to remain hidden away in the country, shabby beyond belief, and with no knowledge of city ways, none of the coquetry of young and smiling sophisticated Miss Manhattan.

It was dusk when we started to cross the great bridge, and, as I have said, motors were cluttered at the entrance and were doubtless thick upon it, running like a continuous black chain to the island. During the War, soldiers often stood at this entrance of the bridge, waiting to be given a lift; and this may be the reason why so many motorists still think of every pedestrian as worthy of a ride, and why it was that so often we were invited, as we strolled along this open pathway, to move more swiftly to the other side. But we spurned all such advances, kindly as they were meant; for on one's first day out, the legs are in good condition, and there is a certain pride in wishing to strut it alone without even the aid of one's staff.

The sky-scrapers loomed in the growing darkness, as we proceeded on our way, like a Babylonian vision; and one by one the lights blossomed in tall windows, until the city behind us was a vast honeycomb of beauty, with the river like a silver girdle surrounding it. Ahead of us smoke-stacks belched forth their black substance, and one pitied the folk who, having worked all day in glorious Manhattan, must turn at evening to the hideous prospect beyond the river, when they might have remained in this jeweled place. Gasometers reared their horrid profiles, and chimneys, like a battalion of black soldiers, stood motionless in the growing darkness. It was to such a place the people were surging, leaving glorious New York. Jim and I loitered long on that bridge.

All of us who live in New York have motored, at one time or another, over Queensboro' Bridge; but how few of us have walked its delectable length! Like all Manhattanites, we leave such pleasant experiences to the foreigners who come to our shores. But even they have not discovered

it as they may within a few years. There are benches along its pathway, and here one may pause and sit in the sunset, as if one were in a stationary airplane, and view the vast city spread out in a wonderful pattern below. There are glimpses of little parks, and the spires of the cathedral are silhouetted against the background of the west. Guttersnipes are bathing along the shore, and you wonder why rich folk do not purchase houses on this river-bank, where they might have their own private pavilions and a view that can hardly be matched. What is the matter with New-Yorkers?

Then there is Blackwell's Island, with its pitifully blind windows. It must be hard enough to be confined on an island without the added horror of tightly closed and sealed shutters of heavy iron. Not content with keeping prisoners segregated, they shut out any chance of a view—or perhaps we would all want to go to Blackwell's Island! The keepers' houses are beautiful in design, and it gives one a sense of omnipotence to sit above them and see them from the air—peo-

ple walking or running hither and thither on graveled pathways, ships floating by on each side of them, and a look of peace about a place that must be anything but peaceful. What a fine residential spot this would make, and how sad it is that it must be utilized, a veritable garden-spot, for the safe-keeping of the criminal!

Like most beautiful things, Manhattan, at once the ugliest and the loveliest city on this continent, gained by distance; and I could not help remembering, as I looked back upon it now, its hideous, mean little streets, its pitiful and cruel slums, its unsavory odors; and as I wandered away from it, I knew it could never deceive me. I knew it too well. On its granite heart I, like many another, had suffered and wept, though also I had laughed there; and some lines began to sing in my head, and over on Long Island, much later that night, when we had reached the real country, I put them down on paper.

We left the city far behind;
Ahead, the roadway seemed to wind
Like something silver white.

"Guttersnipes are bathing along the shore"

ON THE DIFFICULTIES OF WALKING

For dusk had long since dwindled down,
And now the trees were strangely brown,
  And dogs barked in the night.

The moon was up, a monstrous pearl,
As fair as any mortal girl;
  Stray cars went singing by.
Far, far away the city gleamed
Like something that the heart had dreamed—
  A golden butterfly.

It sprawled against the velvet night;
It could not rise and take its flight,
  Although its wings uncurled.
And you and I were glad to go
And leave its prison, even so,
  And pace the lonelier world.

O city, with your splendid lies,
That look of wonder in your eyes,
  We left you far behind;
And though you stared with horrid stare
Into the moonlit heaven there,
  'T was you, not we, were blind!

CHAPTER II

REALLY GETTING STARTED

IT is curious how, the moment you set out to do anything in this troubled world, you immediately encounter opposition. When I told certain friends that I intended to loiter down Long Island in July, they held up their hands in horror, like my motor acquaintance, and instantly asked: "Why that, of all places? And why in summer? You will be overcome by the heat; you will be taken sick, and what you began with enthusiasm will end in disaster." And this, too: "But what will you do for clean linen, and how do you know the inns will not be too crowded, and you may not be able to get a room?"

I could go on indefinitely, giving a litany of friendly counsels and objections. Why people are so interested in telling us what we must not do has always been a mystery to me. It was as

if *they* were to take these little journeys, not I. Having made up my mind to do anything, I usually find a way to do it; and one learns by hard experience that if one takes the advice of this or that friend, one ends by sitting at home when a delectable trip is planned. So I waved all objectors aside, and, though smiled upon in some cases and almost sneered at in others, I set forth as I determined, trusting to Heaven that it would not pour rain on that first evening out, so that my ardor, as well as my clothes, would be instantly dampened, and I would appear rather ridiculous to the few people who saw us off.

But it did not rain; and for an afternoon in late July it was gloriously cool. So, said Jim and I, the Fates were with us; we had won at least the favor of the gods.

Like every great city, New York is not easy to get out of. It is like nothing so much as a huge scrambled egg, or a monstrous piece of dough that not only covers the dish, but runs over the sides of it; and you can ride seemingly forever in the subway or on the elevated road and still be

within the confines of this mighty place, and wonder, like the old lady who was standing in a train to the Bronx, if anybody had a home. "Ain't nobody ever goin' to get out?" you remember she asked at length, weary of hanging on a strap.

Beyond the Queensboro' Bridge there is a flat and desolate-enough looking stretch of roadway, partly artificial; a piece of land that was put there for purposes of utility only, so that motorists, pedestrians, and trolley passengers may make as speedy an exit as possible from the roaring town. You wonder how anything could be quite so forlorn. It is as sad as an old torn calico skirt; and to add to the sadness, a café or two that once might have proved an oasis in this wasteland stares at you with unseeing eyes. The blinds have long since been closed, and the windows are mere ghostly sockets. Lights used to gleam from them at evening; but now the old gilt signs that told of cool and refreshing beer, dip in the dusk, and hang as a king's crown might hang from his head after the Bolsheviki had marched by. It gives one a sense of departed glory. There is a

"A café or two that once might have proved an oasis in this wasteland"

tatterdemalion effect in these suspended haunts of revelry that brings a sigh to the lips. Nothing is so tragic as these innocent, deserted, road-houses, save possibly a table filled with empty wine-glasses after a night of festivity—and the knowledge that there is no more wine in your cellar.

Let me make my first confession right here and now. I must pause to tell the anguishing truth that, disheartened at once by this bleak prospect, and knowing that Flushing, with its pretty main street and park would quickly delight our spirits, Jim and I boarded a packed trolley so that we might speedily pass this wretched jumble of nothing at all.

Moreover, we had no sooner begun to lurch down the line, crushed in with dozens of working people on their tired way home, than we discovered we had taken the wrong car. Instead of going straight to Flushing, we were on the way to Corona, which I had vaguely heard of once or twice, with no real knowledge as to where it was. We found we could transfer there, and would not waste so much time, after all.

It gives you a feeling of extreme youth to be lost so near a city where you have always lived, and Jim and I could not help laughing at what we called an "experience." I was glad we had made the mistake, for at the cross-roads, if the inhabitants of Corona will forgive me for calling two intersecting streets of their humming little town that, I ran into a young fellow standing on the corner who regaled me, as we waited for our car, with the gossip of the village. He had knowledge of every motion-picture star in the world, it seemed, and he loved talking about them. There were prize-fights—amateur ones, of course,—about every evening, and he himself had taken part in many a tussle, and was so proud of his strength that he invited me to put my hand on his arm to convince me of the iron sinews therein. I must say that, having done so, I would have staked all I had on him in any bout. He was of that lithe, panther-like type which is so swift in the ring, and he told me so many happy little stories of himself as a pugilist that Jim and I took quite a fancy to him, and even went

so far as to ask him to dine with us at Whitestone Landing, whither we were bound. He had one of those engagingly simple personalities that win you at once, and he said he would like to come, oh, very much indeed, but he had dined sometime ago (people in the country always seem to sit down to "supper" at five o'clock or so) and, well, ahem! he did n't quite know what he— And he started to step back from the curb where he had been talking, and glanced over his shoulder so many times that finally my eye followed his, and I saw what I should have seen before— a pretty girl, of course. And of course she was waiting for him.

And what did he care about two stupid strangers and their fine shore dinner when he had this up his sleeve all the while? I told him how sorry I was that we had detained him even a second. He smiled that winning smile of his, darted across the road, and seized his girl around the waist in the tightest and most unashamed squeeze I have ever seen, and was off down the street, his very back expressing his happiness.

Well, Bill Hennessy, I 'll never see you again in this mixed-up world, but I certainly wish you well, and if our paths ever do cross again, I hope to see several strapping little Hennessys around you.

Our trolley came at just the right moment thereafter, for we felt strangely lonely there on the corner, with Bill and his joy gone down the street, and as we sagged into Flushing we grew hungrier and hungrier. Yet we determined we would walk through the scented dark to Whitestone Landing. Bill had told us the exact road to take; said he 'd often walked there, and now I knew with whom!

It was all he said it was, a lover's lane to make the most jaded happy. A path for pedestrians ran beside the main road most of the way, soft to the feet, and peaceful in the enveloping night. The moon had come out brilliantly, and the sky was studded with stars. It was getting on to nine o'clock, and except for once when I camped out in Canada, I did n't know where our beds would be that night. It 's a glorious sensation,

such ignorance. We were aware that country taverns closed early, as a rule, off the beaten tracks; but this only added zest to our leisurely walk.

It took us much more than an hour to reach Whitestone Landing, which is right on the water, and we found a place kept by a Norwegian woman; not very much of a place, I must admit. There were ugly chromos on the wall of unbelievably ugly ancestors; but when you have come several miles on foot, and suddenly emerge from the darkness feeling very tired and hungry, almost any light in any window is thrillingly beautiful to you.

"It 's pretty late for supper," was her greeting, and our hearts sank; but she must have seen that we were woefully disappointed. A hopeful "but" immediately fell from her lips. "But maybe I can— Say, do you like hamburger steak and French fried potatoes and clam chowder?"

Did we? We followed her right into her cozy and clean kitchen, where her husband sat in

placid ease, as the husbands of so many landladies sit always, and the odor of that ascending grease—how shall I ever forget it? It smelt as I hope heaven will smell.

And such clam chowder as it was! Thick, juicy, succulent, it dripped down our throats like a sustaining nectar, some paradisial liquid that an angel must have evolved and mixed. I dream of having again some day in a certain Paris café a soup that thrilled me when I first tasted of its wonder; but never, never will anything equal, I am convinced, Madame Bastienssen's clam chowder.

We were given beds that night—and how good the sheets felt!—for the infinitesimal sum (do not gasp, dear reader!) of one dollar each. And the next morning I was awakened, only a few miles from rushing Manhattan, by the crowing of a cock; and when I looked from my window, happily energetic as I had not been for many mornings, I saw wild roses climbing over a fence, and caught glimpses of the gleaming little bay, with rowboats out even this early. Whitestone Land-

"And such clam chowder as it was!"

ing is a place of house-boats. I had some friends once, I remembered, who lived on one all summer, and commuted to the city from it. There is a boat-house, with a bathing pavilion here, and a little steamer plies between Whitestone and Clason Point every half-hour, and excursionists go over for picnics under the trees, with heavy lunch-baskets and half a dozen children at their sides.

Jim and I determined to get an early start, and after a breakfast that was almost as good as our supper of the evening before (nothing could ever taste quite so fine), we set off for Bayside by a back road, which Mr. Bastienssen roused himself sufficiently to tell us of. He was a pale, weak-eyed, blond little man, who seemed resentful of most visitors, though common sense should have told him that they were exceedingly necessary if he was to continue his life of large leisure.

Now, there is nothing I like more than a back road, particularly in these days of hurry and scurry, and it was a perfect morning to walk anywhere. The air was like wine, it was not a bit

hot, and we made such an early start that we met few travelers, and none at all on foot for some time. The road curved, after we passed a little bridge, and woods on the right almost lured us exploringly into them. We did venture to go out of our way to see the dewdrops on the leaves, but as the sun was kindly that morning and could not, in July, be depended upon to remain so, we thought it better to get along. A farmer was tilling the ground near by, and the smell of the earth was good to our nostrils, poor paving-stone slaves that we were; and out in a vast potato patch the rest of the farmer's family were bending over the plants, as serene as if they were hundreds of miles from anywhere. Here the road turned charmingly, and Jim and I were positively singing at our taste of exultant liberty, drinking in our joy, and wondering why we had never thought of coming out like this before. Suddenly, directly around the turning, two strange-looking men came running toward us, swinging their arms in fiendish fashion. They were hatless and coatless, and their shirts, as they

"I was awakened by the crowing of a cock"

came nearer, were seen to be open at the throat. They kept close together, and one of them was huge beyond belief, while the other was smallish and not given to quite the frantic gesticulations of his comrade.

"Maniacs!" I whispered to Jim, not a little alarmed; and it seemed to me I had read that there was an asylum somewhere near this spot; though on second thoughts it was only a military fort. Nevertheless, to see two men running amuck this early of a morning, confounded us, and we thought we had better get out of their way.

I could see that Jim was as uncomfortably frightened as I, though he would not say so. As the strangers came nearer, he dodged to one side, as did I; and then, as they passed us without even a glance in our direction, we both burst out laughing.

"A prize-fighter, with his trainer, practising shadow-boxing!" cried Jim, who knows a lot about such things. "And I'll swear it was Dempsey."

"I don't believe it," I answered, rather ashamed of my inability to recognize such a celebrity of the ring. "At any rate, I 'm sure of one thing."

"What's that?"

"It was n't Jack Johnson." And I had to hurry ahead, for fear Jim would give me a pugilistic punch.

Having met two pedestrians, we of course immediately met two more; just as, when you go down a lonely stretch of road in a car, through some mysterious process three or four machines will suddenly find themselves bunched together at the most narrow and inconvenient spot. This time they were a pair of stout young women, in sweaters of some heavy material, puffing and blowing up a little rise of land, most obviously striving to reduce their girth. *Il faut soufrir pour être belle!* They were not a whit embarrassed at running into us,—not literally, thank heaven!—and went on their mad way as though we did not exist, turning neither to right nor left. I remember distinctly that though this was at

"A pair of stout young women, puffing and blowing up a little rise of land"

the loneliest of cross-roads, a sign informed any one who might pass that this was Fourteenth Street. On one side the farm stretched for countless acres; on the other the bay loomed large and mirror-like in the sun, and ahead of us was only an occasional cottage, rather threadbare, down-at-the-heels dwellings, some of them, which reminded me of old coquettes unwilling to give up, and flirting with any passer-by. Fourteenth Street, to any New-Yorker, conjures up the picture of a busy thoroughfare; and so this sign of blue and white, hanging above an empty stretch of overgrown weeds, brought a smile to my lips. It was on Fourteenth Street, as a child, that I had been taken to see Santa Claus in a department-store window; and always the figure is associated in my mind with dense crowds in holiday spirits, with confetti and other gay reminders of Christmas.

It was at another turning that we came in sight of Fort Totten, while across the water Fort Schuyler stood serenely and firmly, and I knew that

City Island wandered out into the sound a little farther up on the other side, close to Hart's Island.

I wanted to go to Fort Totten; but we were in no hurry, and I imagined that it must be time for luncheon. True to our compact, we had n't looked at our watches or asked the time along the road. But we had been going steadily for three or four hours, I was certain, and Jim suggested that we sit under a tree for awhile. The sun was fast mounting the heavens, and I found, at a cross-roads, just the spot for a still hour or so. We had brought some sandwiches along, and there was a glen below from which I could hear the water gushing. To linger a bit would be delightful. I had not loafed for so long that it would be quite an adventure now. As I dreamed on the grass, I began to think in rhyme, as one often does when there is n't a thing in the world to worry about; and before I knew it I had made this simple song to fit my mood:

All the drowsy afternoon,
Idleness and I

"Idleness and I"

Dreamed beneath a spreading tree,
  Looking at the sky.
Ah, we let the weary world
  Like a cloud drift by!

It was good to get away
  From the town of men,
Finding I could strangely be
  Just a lad again,
Hearing only water sing
  In the neighboring glen.

When had Idleness and I
  Taken such a trip?
When had we put by before
  Heavy staff and scrip,
Meeting on a summer day
  In such fellowship?

Long and long ago, may be,
  I had dared to look
For a whole, glad, sleepy, day
  In a rushing brook,
Reading in the haunted page
  Of the earth's green book.

Then, forgetting what I found
  In the volume old,
I returned from solitude

Where the shadows fold,
Seeking what the foolish seek—
Empty joy and gold.

Now, grown wise, I crave again
Just the simple sky
And the quiet things I loved
In the years gone by.
We are happy all day long,
Idleness and I.

CHAPTER III

ALONG SUNLIT AND MOONLIT ROADS

HAVING rested royally by the road, we fared on to Bayside; but first we turned in at a pair of big gates, thinking we were entering some rich man's estate, and caring not at all whether we were desired or not. "But I hope we won't be taken for Bolsheviki," Jim said.

A man in uniform moved here and there, but we did n't pay much attention to this fact, until a building loomed ahead of us that could not possibly have been a private dwelling. A sergeant and a corporal sat on the veranda, and as Jim and I were very thirsty, we asked for a drink of water. The sergeant immediately took us within, where it was dim and cool, and I noticed some barred doors immediately in the center of a great space. There was a painful silence all

about, but as I went into a little side room to get my drink, I heard a *click-click*, *click-click*, as of some one walking up and down with a cane. I asked the sergeant what this noise could be, and pointed to the barred door, and, my eyes having become accustomed to the gloom, I saw the shadowy figure of a young soldier on crutches pacing up and down the corridor of a huge cell.

"Would you like to go in?" the sergeant asked; and when I said I would, for I have always been interested in prison conditions, he unbolted the great door, and the one occupant of the place said, "Good afternoon, sir," and seemed really glad, as I suppose any one in his situation would be, of human companionship. He was lame, and I asked him how it came about that a boy wounded in the war should be undergoing this punishment. "Oh, I overstayed my leave," he said; and then I knew we had come right in to Fort Totten, having left the main road when we entered the gates.

If, ten minutes before, any one had told me that soon I would be talking to a lame and im-

prisoned soldier in a dark cell, I would have thought him mad. There Jim and I had been dreaming and drowsing under a tree in the pleasant sunshine, and all the while this lame boy, not a hundred yards away, had been confined, with no glimpse of even "that little tent of blue we prisoners call the sky." All the other men, he told us, were out in the fields at work; but he, because of his lameness, was obliged to remain in the ghastly cell. The penalty of courage in the war, I suppose. A strange world, my masters, more inexplicable every day we live in it! But there was one consolation: he was receiving the best of medical attention, and he told us he had nothing to complain of.

There is a lovely walk between the fort and Bayside, with little red farm-houses here and there and more austere, rigorous, dignified homes as you approach that town. The road curves, and there are soft paths if your feet begin to ache; and I remember one house, down by the water, with a splendid row of Lombardy poplars and small shrubs and bushes like giant mushrooms

forming a lane to the bay, a bit of French landscape that was indeed enchanting. A stillness seems to brood over this part of the island; but suddenly you find yourself on the outskirts of busy little Bayside, where many actor folk live in the summer, I believe. You see a small Italian villa once in a while—the kind of little home you'd like to pick up and put in your pocket and take away with you, it looks so cozy and compact, so like a house bought in a toy-shop.

It was here we got on the main road, where there is always much traffic, and where, in consequence, it is no fun to trudge along on foot. We determined we would ask any one who came by for a lift, and we hailed several cars. They did not stop. I turned to Jim, after the eighth or ninth driver had sailed by us, and said:

"What in heaven's name is the matter with us—or with them, rather? Surely we look like respectable piano-tuners, at least."

A flivver came along just then, with two men on the front seat, and a perfectly empty back seat.

"We hailed several cars. They did not stop"

"This will do nicely," we decided; and I put up my beautiful Japanese stick, and called out, "Say, won't you give us a lift to Douglaston?"

But they, too, sped on. We could n't understand it. They had proceeded about fifty yards, when we noticed that they slowed up, conversed a bit, and then deliberately backed in our direction. We ran forward, jumped in, and thanked them.

"But would you mind telling us," Jim asked, as we started off at a good clip, "why you did not stop for us at once?"

Our new friends looked embarrassed, and then one of them offered:

"Well, to be honest, we each have a pint flask on our hip, and we thought you might be federal agents."

"We may wear plain clothes, but we 're not plain-clothes men," we said, and laughed; and then, before we knew it, we had reached Douglaston, and stopped for a drink of water at a cool-looking well I saw that would have delighted the soul of *Pollyanna;* for it bore a neat and hos-

pitable sign above it, reading, "All is well."

Just a mile or so away, on the water, is beautiful Douglas Manor, which used to be the estate of Mr. George W. W. Douglas, a wealthy gentleman who evidently had a consuming passion for trees. In 1814 he bought this extensive property from the old Van Wyck family, to whom it had come down as a grant from George III. The oldest oak-tree on Long Island is here. Some one was going to cut this tree down recently, in order to build, but a man with a great sense of civic pride, Mr. James Hoffman, purchased it instead, and now it is, happily, to be forever preserved. The old club-house at the manor is the original Van Wyck homestead, and a beautiful building it is.

In 1819 Mr. Douglas built the present hotel in Douglas Manor, which was his residence. He would have no trees disturbed, and the sidewalks are made to run about the monstrous umbrellas which shield the houses everywhere. There are fourteen varieties of beeches, and about twenty-five different kinds of evergreens, some of them

very rare specimens. One fernleaf beech, in particular, is considered a remarkable arboreal thing of splendor. It must be about a hundred years old. In the manor house ancient mahogany bookcases, made in sections, are now here. And yet there are those who say that sectional bookcases are a comparatively new idea!

All over Long Island you see houses with wonderful old shingles. Would that we could get some like them to-day! There is a feeling of permanence about the farm-houses, and some of them look as if they almost resented the growth of the many roads around them, and the encroachments of motors chugging and clattering by. Yet they manage to preserve their aspect of tranquillity, and chickens and pigs and goats loiter on many a farm-house lawn not many miles from New York, as unconcerned by the modern spirit of unrest as if a flivver had never passed the gate. And there seems to be no real poverty on Long Island. You can walk or motor for miles, and though a few houses will look shabby, they never bear that appearance of downright slovenliness

you see elsewhere. There is always a garden, however small; and, situated as it is, there is always good fishing along the shores, and a real livelihood may easily be maintained. Before the inevitable arrival of the millionaire, Long Island dreamed its days away in happy peace, and many a prosperous farmer cannot be driven away, despite the walled and formal gardens that often come to his very threshold.

We had been captivated by Douglas Manor—where, by the way, Jim had taken a swim—and were loath to leave it. Good friends had given us a fine dinner at the inn, but we would not spend the night, determined as we were to push on across the island as far as Lynbrook, begging or stealing rides if we got too tired. There was not much of interest on the way, but with daylight saving there were still many hours of the afternoon left. It was a sunlit road, with turns and shadowy oases now and then to relieve the monotony of our walk. We got as far as the Oakland Golf Club links, when we found we

"We bumped contentedly along, getting dustier and dustier"

were really tired; so we "hooked" a ride on a farm-wagon. Maps are the most deceptive things in the world. I love to pore over them, but I have no sense of direction at all, and when a road curves I never remember that that makes it all the longer.

The farm-wagon was not very easy-going; but beggars cannot be choosers, so we bumped contentedly enough along, getting dustier and dustier, and not caring a whit. The farmer was strangely uncommunicative and seemed to take no heed of us at all. It was as though we were a pair of calves he was taking to market; yes, dear reader, I know there is another obvious comparison that could be made. When there came a sudden turning to the right, we jumped off, and thanked him; but he did n't turn his head an inch. We saw that his farm was just at the turning, a simple-enough place, and presently a boy who must have been his son ran to the fence and made strange signs to him; and we realized that our silent host had been a deaf-and-dumb

man. No wonder he didn't mind having his home at a busy cross-roads. They say the motors whiz by here in battalions of a Sunday.

We got another lift later on. Many towns, like Floral Park, do not live up to their names; they are floral only from the railway station, though that is not to be sneezed at, since many villages are particularly hideous where the trains come in.

It is curious that on the outskirts of Lynbrook, which is a dreary, commonplace, drab, uninteresting little town, there should be a miraculously beautiful inn. It is as though a shabby, poor old lady suddenly pulled out a wonderful French lace handkerchief in a dingy street, and exclaimed, "Just look!" This inn (alas! no longer do we use the charming word "tavern") is off the beaten track, and one has to know of it to reach it; but we wanted to get there for a bite of food, since our hike had made us desperately hungry again. That is one of the many joys of tramping, or staying out all day in the open air: you eat like a giant. And you sleep like a baby.

Beneath an arbor outside, in the moonlight, while our sea-bass and our salad and coffee were being prepared, we watched two gorgeous peacocks disporting themselves, and several pheasants strutted up and down. You felt as if you were somewhere in France, for French was the language we heard on the other side of the grapes, where several waiters were resting and smoking after the day's work. The big dinner crowd from town had long since gone, and the place was completely ours. We had freshened up, and it was well on to eleven o'clock when we sat down to that delicious little supper. But afterwards we found, to our regret, that monsieur, who came himself to greet us in a grand chef's costume, with picturesque cap and white apron, had no rooms for us; his was only a restaurant now.

It was a fearful anticlimax to loiter down to the center of the ugly town and have to take stuffy rooms that opened almost on the public square. But any bed was comfortable after the long day outdoors, and though a raucous band

played loud tunes beneath us, and motors tooted as they swiftly turned corners, I sank into an easy slumber, from which I did not awaken until a crash of thunder and a vivid flash of lightning came toward dawn.

It had been cool the day before, but this storm, like many another, simply made the atmosphere heavy and more oppressive—so heavy that we had n't the heart to go back to our French inn for breakfast, as we had planned to do. Instead, we ate what we could get in a sad room where the chairs were piled on the tables, until they formed a fence around us, and a trying light from a sky-light revealed a dirty ball-room floor. Covered drums were on the musicians' stand,—would that they had been muffled during the night!—and the one sluggish waiter on duty wandered about among this tattered place of artificial flowers like a lost soul, fetching a spoon now, a fork later, and some coffee, when it suited his, and the cook's, convenience. The heavy red plush hangings, with the dust only too evident in the garish morning light, were draped back with cheap brass

"The one sluggish waiter on duty"

cords, and we could hardly wait to get out of such a place. Any road, no matter how hot, would be better than this. It was like viewing a soiled ball-gown at nine in the morning, with a grotesquely painted face above it.

All the towns and villages along the South Shore between, say, Lynbrook and Bayport are but a means to an end—the reaching of the real outskirts, those more fascinatingly informal places that lead to Shinnecock Hills. Such spots as Freeport, Massapequa, Merrick (although one must say a kindly word for this charming little residential neighborhood), Babylon, Bay Shore, and even Islip, are too hard-heartedly decent in aspect to give one any sense of comradeship; and Jim and I, like everybody else, had motored through or to them so often that they were an old story to us. One wishes to pass them over on a jaunt such as ours, though remembering bygone happiness in them, as one would skip uninteresting passages in an otherwise good book—a book one had dipped into many times, so that one knows the very paragraphs to avoid. There are

some splendid estates along the Merrick Road, and I suppose the total wealth here would amount to an unbelievable sum; but mixed in with places that the architects have striven to make lovely, and succeeded in their efforts, are too many *nouveau-riche* dwellings that must belong to the period of Brooklyn renaissance. Oh, how I detest Mansard roofs! and one sees plenty of them here. Bits of water, like little mirrors, break the monotony of a long motor ride through this region, and a bridge and a stretch of hedge every now and then do much to vary the scene. Yet, taken all in all, it is an area that has never thrilled me. William K. Vanderbilt kept up a vast park at Islip, and seemingly for miles there is a high iron fence, and a warning to keep out (as if one could ever get in), and a statement to the effect that this is a private preserve, where birds and fish and game are raised, and allowed to increase and multiply like so many dollars in a remote vault.

Other multimillionaires, I am told, raise horses round about, and behind tall brick walls and

solid green hedges is many a beautiful home that the mere wayfarer cannot view; only the elect who professionally go to week-ends and drink in the delights of the greensward and the golden private beaches, and whisper of them afterward to the less favored in town.

Just outside Lynbrook, on this muggy morning, we had the energy to start down the Merrick Road, knowing full well it was a place for motorists only, with no scrap of a path, save here and there, for pedestrians. We did it, knowing how stupid we were. We did not like the thought of a train, and we said to ourselves that surely some kind-hearted driver or truckster would give us a lift. It is more difficult, however, as we soon discovered, for two people to be taken care of in this way than one. We were passed scornfully by several times, and even suspicious glances were cast our way.

"Revenue officers again they think us, getting the evidence in pairs," I said. "How times have changed! A year ago such a situation would have been impossible."

Then Peter came along. Peter drove a great, strong, massive truck, and he sat triumphantly alone on an unbelievably wide seat, with little baggage; none, apparently, from our point of vantage. We hailed him, and he instantly stopped in that burning stretch of road. The sun had come out, and it was as hot as I cared to feel it.

Peter smiled on us, bade us get in, and before we knew it we were speeding on, though not too fast, passing fashionable limousines in which we hoped rode friends or acquaintances who would see us on our proud eminence on a wagon marked "Bologna, Ham, and Sausages." But no such luck.

Peter had been in the army—ten months in France, where he was utilized in the repair shops because of his mechanical bent; he would rather tinker with machinery than eat a square meal, and he was a husky young fellow. And he was proud of his job. His employer had the biggest and finest trucks in Brooklyn, he told us. They never broke down, and when he recognized one

coming toward us—they did a thriving business on Long Island, evidently—he hailed the driver in that free-masonry of fellow employees, and remarked: "Ain't that a fine truck, now? You get a better view of it when you ain't on it." We assured him it was because of the beauty of his wagon that we had hailed him.

We saw a sailor trudging along ahead of us, and Peter, once having been innoculated with the germ of hospitality, drew up and asked him to join our happy party. Jack was going to Babylon to get recruits for the navy, he was quick to inform us, and he was loud in his love of the service. He had been on submarine-chasers all during the war, and he and Peter hit it up in great shape, doing most of the talking, while Jim and I merely listened. It was as though you heard two college boys from a university to which you had not been privileged to go, talking over their secret societies, their professors, their dormitories.

But Peter was going only as far as Massapequa, much to his regret; but he might go on

farther later in the day. So we all got out when his turning came. Right behind us thundered a huge wagon, crowded with men and boys who wore little white caps, and waved flags industriously; I think it must have been an Elks outing. I never knew; but they were blowing horns and cheering at everybody, and when they saw Jack, they yelled frantically to him to get aboard. They wanted none of Jim and me; indeed, there was hardly room for one more human in that packed truck; and the last we saw of him, he was being made much of by the Elks, if such they were, and I thought I saw him already beginning his recruiting among those happy fellows. He took off his cap, waving us good-by, while, Peter having disappeared in a cloud of dust, we sauntered on alone.

There were many little roads tempting us out of the beaten paths, and several times we took one, rejoicing in the proximity to the ocean, where the salt air came to our nostrils, and great elms and oaks sheltered us from the blazing rays of the sun. But we did n't care; we had hooked

"There were many little roads tempting
us out of the beaten paths"

many a ride, and we knew that almost whenever we wanted another we could get it.

We sat under a tree, in the tall grass for about an hour, when again I heard the rumble of a truck—Peter's, of course. Who could mistake those heavy wheels? "He's back," I said to Jim. And sure enough, it was he, and he was on the lookout for us, and drew up at the side of the road, just as a taxi-driver might for a passenger who would surely pay him and give him a goodly tip in the bargain.

"I 'm going all the way to Bayport," he exclaimed, happier than we could hope over the prospect of our company again. We felt supremely flattered. "I 'll take you all the way," he added generously. And he did. He could n't understand it when we told him we did n't mind footing it a bit; but we knew there would be plenty of other chances to make haste slowly, so joyfully climbed in, feeling that Peter was a real friend of ours.

Off the main road at Bayport, which used to be the home of John Mason, the celebrated actor,

there is another French inn, not generally known, and boasting no fashionable exterior, but a plain-enough building, with a comfortable veranda, and kept by a young man and his wife who can cook to perfection, who never have a crowd around them, and who love to have their guests walk right into the kitchen and select their steak or their lobster, and make suggestions for a dinner that is beyond parallel.

It was for this inn that we were headed, and many a time I had arrived at its door by automobile. Now, however, we came up in this lumbering truck, and monsieur and madame could not believe their eyes when we alighted thus informally. Nothing would do but that Peter should lunch with us. He parked the bologna-sausage-ham car at the roadside as carefully as though it had been a ten-thousand dollar limousine, and when he had washed up, he was as personable as any one would wish to have him. Jim and I were not Beau Brummells, I assure you. We all had a meal to delight the gods, and then Peter told us he would have to attend

Blue Point

to some business and hurry back to Brooklyn. We did n't like to see him go, it was still so terribly hot; but he was a business man first, and a society man afterward, though he did n't put it that way himself, and nothing we could offer would tempt him to be detained.

Jim went in bathing at Blue Point, a few miles away, while I strolled about Bayport, through lanes where the trees look, oddly enough, like kneeling camels, and where the sidewalks, as in Douglas Manor, are built to go around them, and where there is a hush that must be like the quiet of heaven, so far are you from the railroad, with its iron clamor.

That night the moon came up like a big pearl out of the sea, half hidden by a galleon of clouds, and Jim and I went loitering about the half-lighted roads; for we liked the spot so much, and monsieur and madame were so gracious, that we were determined to stay the night. Dim, cool rooms awaited us, with the whitest of linen and the best of baths.

I have often noticed, in motoring at night,

what a new aspect the scenery presents, with one's search-light forging through the mist and darkness. To-night, afoot, it was quite the same, and on these off roads, with the world seemingly far away, I made up a song that went like this:

Walking in the moonlight down a lonely road,
How the hedges glisten like scenery of paint!
Cardboard are the trees, and cardboard each abode,
A curious illusion when the moon is faint.

Motors whirl around us on far, crowded ways;
Pasteboard are the poplars, stark against the sky.
Is this the world we wandered through the summer days?
It 's like a dream, it's moonshine. Reality, good-by!

It could n't be real, that ghostly moon up there, dimly reflected in a tiny sheet of water by the path we trod, that whispering low wind in the rushes and in the trees. How wonderful it was to be here in this quiet, quaint little town, with its lawns of velvet, its solemn, empty church, its real dirt roads, and its outspreading, hospitable trees, that clung together like a nation in time of war, as firmly rooted in the ground as a people

should be rooted in the soil they love and from which they sprang!

I recall a circular summer dining-room on the outskirts of Bayport, surrounded with hollyhocks and lit with candles, which we could see from the road at a turning. It looked like a crown that would never crumble, and we could hear the people laughing within its happy circle, and though we had no wish to pry upon them, we could n't help pausing and listening to their gay chatter. Crickets chirped, and down in a damp meadow frogs were croaking—delightful sounds of mid-July. Somewhere, in another house, a young girl began to sing a wistful old song, and the moon went spinning behind a sudden cloud; and all at once we felt strangely alone out there in the scented dark. To think that people lived so excellently and wisely all the time; that their days went so gladly for them, year in and year out, and that this simple experience should be for us in the nature of an adventure!

We turned back to our inn, healthily tired, and a little better, I hope, for our day in the open.

I was looking at the map when we returned, underneath my lamp, to see just where we would go next; and I was struck, as my finger ran over the fascinating paper, with the litany of lovely and curious names of the villages beyond. They kept singing in my head as I went to sleep, and finally I had to get up and put them down in rhyme. I called it

A SONG OF THE SOUTH SHORE

Now we must on to Bellport before the sun is high,
And laugh along the roadside with bird and butterfly;
And then to green Brookhaven, hidden behind the trees,
Our comrades only casual cars, and rows of hedge, and bees.
It 's up at daybreak we must be, and roam the island over,
Light-hearted in the summer days, bright-hearted through the clover.

We 'll jog along to Speonk and larger towns thereby;
When one is just a gipsy, how swift the hours fly!
We 'll take the road at sunset and hear the croaking frog,
And soon we 'll be where water calls, and find ourselves in Quogue.
Bright, dancing bays will wink at us before the journey's over—
Oh, it is good in summer-time to be a careless rover!

Then on again to Shinnecock and Great Peconic Bay.
It is n't far to Southampton; we 'll make it in a day.
Old, lovely towns on rolling downs that sleep and dream
and smile;
Ah! some wear gowns of calico, and some go in for style.
But we, like tramps, knock at their doors, unheeding
Fashion's bonnet.
One town is like the freest verse; one 's like a formal
sonnet.

At moonlight we will strike Good Ground, and, when the
world is still,
If we 're in luck, we 'll come, like Puck, to quiet Water
Mill.
And then to Wainscott we 'll press on with tired foot and
hand,
Till Amagansett smiles on us, and then — the Promised
Land.
It 's good to need a healing sleep in the rich summer
weather—
Two friends who fare along the road, happy and young
together.

There 's Rocky Point to-morrow, too, that dreams by
Fort Pond Bay,
With stretches of a lonely shore that gleams for miles
away;
Too far for pilgrims in gay cars who crave the louder
things;
But you and I fare on to them, far happier than kings.

For Montauk Point is at the end, and there the ocean thunders,
And the lonely coast gives up at last its old immortal wonders.

CHAPTER IV

GETTING ALONG TO SHINNECOCK

BETWEEN Patchogue and Bellport there is a road that dips and turns, with here and there a bridge to break the monotony of one's walk and glimpses of pools and streams to add delight to what is a charming province.

I remember once, when America first got into the war, how I motored over this same road with a friend from Bellport who was taking her young colored butler to the registration office at Patchogue, where it was necessary for him to report. The poor fellow was very nervous, and we kept heartening him with gentle words. In his ignorance he was certain he would be sent overseas that very afternoon, and the sudden separation from a good home and his best girl did not tend to make him happy. He kept repeating that he "wanted to serve Uncle Sam, anything to help

Uncle Sam," but he would rather be a potato-peeler (as most of us would if we were as honest as he) than a fighting soldier and run the risk of being gassed by those awful Huns. We assured him as best we could that if his talent ran to peeling potatoes, the powers that be would soon find it out, and no doubt he would prove a valuable addition to the company kitchen and be kept far behind the firing-line.

It would lend a romantic touch to my story if I could truthfully say that Washington went to France as a common soldier and died heroically in the trenches and never was called upon to peel even one potato. But such is not the case. He remained all during the conflict on Long Island, cooking for, peeling for, and waiting on, the officers' mess. And it made my jaunt over the road where once I had accompanied him to serve his country and his beloved Uncle Sam all the pleasanter to realize that he, too, traveled over it frequently now, for he is back with his old mistress in Bellport. But he does not walk. Not Washington! No such labored, plebeian a means of

locomotion for him. He owns a little car, and I believe his best girl is now Mrs. Washington; and they are as happy as I whenever they go through this green way, now that a certain form of peace has come back to our land.

The morning we left Bayport, or, rather, the morning I got back to it after a few days' necessary absence in town, dawned beautifully bright. There were jewels on the green, opulent hedges. It was still late July, and the country wore that look of richness that comes at this gorgeous season. There is a splendid hour of summer when nature is at flood-tide, when the bins of the world seem to be overflowing with sweetness and greenness; a lavish moment that makes the heart ache, the earth is so crowded with peace and delight. You gasp in the presence of such perfection; for every leaf seems to hold out a hand to you as you pass under arching trees, and every pool of water seems literally to pause and whisper that this glory will not last. "Drink it in now, while you can," it softly says. "August will be upon us before you know it; and then the

tide will turn, a different kind of beauty will be in the bright mornings, another wonder will float over this water in the afternoons. The evenings will grow cooler. A change will take place. So brood over this mystery of full summer now; for it passes even while you are contemplating it."

And it is true. The summer must hurry on; the splendor must fade, to make way for the golden tapestries that autumn soon, too soon, will hang upon the hills.

There were little dips and side trails all around us, and having, as always, no thought of time, we often investigated the roads that "led to God knows where," finding delight in a sort of schoolboy exploration, surprising a cow calmly grazing in some off field, or causing a family of hogs to grunt and attempt a clumsy scampering. Off the main road, I could n't help jotting down this song on this particularly bright morning in praise of tramping:

Through many a dale and hollow,
Round many a curving trail,

We dipped, as dips a swallow,
And cared if none might follow,
  Nor feared our feet might fail.

Through sunlit, warm morasses,
  Through many a summer day,
With glimpses of green grasses
And quaint, mysterious passes,
  We took our care-free way.

By many a farm and meadow
  And many a lovely down,
We tramped, in sun and shadow,
Wherever Fancy led. Oh,
  Forgotten was the town!

At every road's new turning,
  Some new delight we spied.
The fields with joy were burning,
And we, fresh scenes discerning,
  Kept up our glorious stride.

What mattered love's mismatings!
  What mattered life's hard load
Or Bradstreet's silly ratings,
For we had happy datings
  With God along the road!

I had a new companion with me this time, a young fellow named Gordon. He had been in

the war, and he said that walking quietly around Long Island appealed to him after the noise and confusion of the trenches.

We got on to Bellport, that village which contains charming little houses, some of which rest neatly on the ground, as though they had no cellars, and give the impression of well-constructed scenery in a light opera. There are gates that click delightfully, old-fashioned flower gardens, paths bordered with phlox and hollyhocks. A blue bay shines in the sun, so radiant that it has been painted by many artists, notably William J. Glackens, who used to live here. Indeed, many artists have loved this quaint little village. James and May Wilson Preston still make their summer home within its quiet confines, and they, like every one else, go out on the golf-links in the afternoon, where there are glimpses of the water all along the course.

Many of these towns, however, have lost during the last few years that simplicity which was once one of their most cherished possessions. Evening clothes were never tolerated; it was al-

ways white flannels and the most inexpensive frocks at every dinner party or dance. But the rich creep in everywhere, lured by the easy-going spirit they would give anything to emulate; and then the inevitable tragedy occurs. They kill the very thing they love the most, and frocks and frills, laces and jewels, conventional costumes, are put on in the golden heart of summer, and the old simplicity goes as new complications arrive. A barn dance becomes a stately festival in an over-decorated club-house, and the flivver is superseded by yellow cars with magnificent names, and Mrs. So-and-So will not bow to Mrs. Somebody Else, and it 's good-by to real fun and democracy, and "Let 's go down to the Southampton beach" instead of across the quiet, dreaming little bay in a rocking tub of a boat for a dip in the surf.

It 's too bad, but in America we never seem able to keep, for three or four consecutive years even, the same atmosphere we were so bent on creating. We rent a lovely cottage, invite our friends into it, and then immediately run away

from it. For we have heard that the next town down the road is smarter or more thrilling, and if the stock market has done well by us, we must get a bigger house during June, July, and August, and flutter a bit more, soar just a little higher.

There were some village boys playing ball in a field beyond Bellport, and it happened to be a quiet morning, and there seemed to be no one with the leisure to watch their game. So we, remembering Whitman's line, "If there are to be great poets, we must have great audiences, too," constituted ourselves the audience; and I don't know that I have ever enjoyed a game more. There were some fine players on that little team, and as home run after home run was made, we noticed a lad looking wistfully on, with one arm gone—his right arm, too. I whispered to Gordon, "Too bad, is n't it? No doubt he used to play, and perhaps the war has robbed him of that pleasure now." Scarcely were the words out of my mouth when he took his place at the bat, no one except ourselves seeming the least surprised

that he should do so. He made two hits, to my utter amazement. But why should n't he, after all, have done himself and the home team proud? A boy who could be undefeated in the face of such an accident as must have been his surely would not have been defeated at base-ball. We cheered him to the echo, making up in enthusiasm what we lacked in numbers.

It is only a short walk from Bellport to Brookhaven; three or four miles at the most, I should say. You turn to the right when a wooden church comes into view, and here you strike real country roads, and are much more apt to encounter carts and wagons than hurrying motors. For Brookhaven is just what its name implies, a quiet little village where one would have time for contemplation, where there is n't the slightest pretense or desire for it; a tiny side room, as it were; a pleasant place to take a nap, to write a letter, or to read a book. James L. Ford and his sister, who always have seemed to me like Charles and Mary Lamb, pass their summers here in a cottage typical of what a literary man's cottage should

be; and it is here in this silent spot that some of Mr. Ford's wittiest reviews have been written and some of his cleverest *bon mots* uttered, champagne exploding and delighting the guests at quiet country dinner parties. Several artists also find the summer months to their liking here, and you can't wonder at their choice. If one should not wish to keep house, there is a homelike inn where the best of food is to be obtained, and the place is near enough to New York to make commuting possible, even though not desirable. There is a bit of bay to sail or row upon, fishing, and the kind of human society a thinking man longs for. Round about Brookhaven the grass grows high, like a boy in the back country whose hair is allowed to get shaggy because there is no barber handy. And there are delicate lattice fences and trellises painted a rich blue, and all the old-fashioned flowers in the world, seemingly, peep over them and smile at you and flirt with you as you go down the road. This is the sort of village I dote upon, informal, gentle as a nun, but ready

"There are eyes watching you"

for a party any time the right folk come to pay it a visit.

Between Brookhaven and Mastic and the Moriches there are any number of cool back roads, and people on farms here are primitive and plain, and would exult, if they were articulate, I have no doubt, in their cold sobriety and reserve. Through places like these you can walk for hours, and apparently it is a deserted district. There are plenty of houses, but no one seems to be in them. The shutters will be drawn in the "parlor," which is kept for the company that never comes, and one can almost see those dim and shadowy, unaired rooms, with shells and plush family albums, heavy lambrequins, and faded lace curtains, carpets with big pink roses for a central design, and a filigreed wallpaper that would make the heart ache, against which crude family portraits rest in austere rows. You are aware, as you pass, that even though no one is visible, there are eyes watching you, and people with little else to do are wondering who you are

and where you are going. It rained softly the afternoon we got off the beaten road, and Gordon and I had this sense of being stared at to such a degree that we got into a foolish fit of laughter. We were so sure of not being alone on a road that, when one looked about you, was so decidedly empty.

"I wonder what they see in us," Gordon said.

"I wonder, too," I answered. "It 's so different in New York. There no one pays the slightest attention to anybody else. But here—well, I feel as if we were in a mystery play, and I really don't like it, do you?"

"No. And, gosh! look at that big dog coming toward us! He looks fiendish; and it 's raining hard, and we 'll be soaked through."

We got under an oak-tree—it was just a shower, not a storm—and escaped the sniffling, barking canine, much, I think, to his disgust. And then, wet though I was, I wrote this on a scrap of paper and handed it over to Gordon:

I walk along the city streets,
And no one seems to care.

The people merely think I 'm out
  To get a breath of air;
In drenching rain I cross the road
  With manner debonair.

But if I walk on country roads
  When days are warm and damp,
The folk peep from their windows like
  Old tipsy Sairey Gamp,
And whisper in their farm-houses:
  "Just look! There goes a tramp!"

The dogs come out and snap at me;
  They have n't any pity:
And children call me cruel names;
  I 've never thought them witty.
Oh, there are moments when I crave
  The hard, unnoting city!

"But you don't, and you know it," was Gordon's only comment on what I thought were purely satirical lines. "What liars you verse-writers are! Come on; the shower 's over."

And we trudged on.

Through the leafy greenness, all the lovelier because of the pleasant burst of rain, we came to a broken-down gate that apparently led to Moriches Bay,—we were not far from the wa-

ter's-edge, we knew,—and in crudely formed black letters above it was this legend on a piece of board:

LADY UPHOLSTERERS
OF
LONG ISLAND
PICNIC

What a forlorn day for an outing! we said to ourselves. And yet here were we taking one, and enjoying it, though the afternoon was murky and sticky. But what could the "lady upholsterers" look like, not so much singly, but in a group? And how many of them were there, and how had they happened to band together for this summer holiday? Was it an annual affair, and were they young or old or middle-aged? Did they have husbands to support them, or were they the wage-earners of their families? They fascinated us until we saw eight of the most weary and bedraggled-looking females imaginable emerging from the woods near by, burdened with baskets and shawls, pails and jars, and two

"Our hearts ached for them"

screaming children. As Goldberg says, "And all this comes under the head of pleasure!" What a day they must have had, poor dears, after weeks, nay, months, of heavy upholstery work, pounding in tacks and stretching unyielding cloth over numerous Long Island sofas! Our hearts ached for them, for no doubt, like all picnickers, they had planned this outing far ahead, and of course the sky had to empty out buckets of water upon them and the morning arrive full of oppressive heat. They took their sodden way down the lane ahead of us, and after a few hours of sitting on the green grass, life was to mean for them again only a long row of chairs to be forever mended, forever repaired.

We decided that, although there was a certain kind of doubtful privacy on these back roads, they were depressing to-day, and we would work our way back to the main thoroughfare, and get to Moriches by nightfall. So we turned to the left, encountering a pleasant-spoken farmer who insisted on our riding with him, and who thought us quite mad to be on a walking tour when the

thermometer registered eighty-five degrees in the shade. "You don't *have* to walk?" he said. Even though we told him we liked going afoot, he was skeptical still, and I have the notion that he was suspicious, before he left us, of such a pair, and rather regretted the kindness of a lift. He was going to a railway station, so he dropped us at the main road, and we fared on to the next town for our evening meal.

But on the way numerous cars passed us. Finally—I do not recall just why—I was attracted by a flivver coming in our direction which seemed to be making an almost human noise. A sort of wheezing sound came out of it as it tried its best to get up a slight hill. There was a little bridge between us, and when we were midway upon it, the car came to a complete standstill. I saw that a young colored man and woman were the occupants, and the face of the boy looked familiar. He was so busy trying to discover what ailed his machine that he had n't yet cast a glance in our direction.

Suddenly he looked up as we deliberately stepped over to his side.

"Lord o' mercy, if it ain't Mister Towne!" he said, and rose and shook hands with me, excitedly.

It was Washington, and introductions made it plain that there was indeed a bride, and complete happiness now that the ugly war was over and done.

"I can fix dis here car in no time," Washington announced, after we had recalled our last ride together on this same road, much nearer New York. He wanted to take us on to the next village,—he could n't understand any more than the farmer why we should be footing it on such a day,—and it was all I could do to make him understand that our preference was genuine. But he, too, had a will of his own; and somehow —maybe it was the sticky heat—Gordon and I found ourselves in the rear seat ten minutes later, and Washington had turned about and was conducting us, with apparent pride, to Eastport. It was no trouble at all, no more than peeling pota-

toes. His only fear was that the car would misbehave again, and I was sure he and Mrs. Washington could never have survived such a catastrophe.

Wind-mills begin to loom up around the Moriches and Eastport, dozens of them, that make you think yourself in a foreign land; and the salt air from the sea comes to your nostrils as you jog along. There is a freedom, a wildness, a beauty, about this part of the island unknown to other spots of the South Shore. And then, to have a companion who has never been this far, and who has no idea of what a gorgeous surprise is in store for him when the foot of Shinnecock Hills is reached, adds a zest to the journey.

The towns are much alike, however. Speonk lives up to its ugly name, and though we saw goats and calves in a few front yards here, thus going the chickens one better, occasionally we would glimpse a lovely little cottage with an old-fashioned garden and a lovely old lady among her flowers. Quogue, which is semi-fashionable

and sprinkles out like a broken jewel, could lure one from the main road any day, at any season; for it has a wonderful beach, and the ocean froths splendidly and angrily all along the coast. Hidden away, tucked in corners, are villages like Remsenburg in this region, just a handful of houses sparkling in the sun, where people who are wise enough to like peace rather than stupid fashion foregather and really enjoy a summer as it was certainly meant to be enjoyed. And every village, no matter how small, has its roll of honor in the public square, a record of the boys who died in France, their names inscribed forever on a tablet; and you can hardly believe that even from these tiny places soldiers went forth on a certain day.

Outside Westhampton we came upon a quaint castle, built of cement, around which a staircase wandered, like a vine. A little tower stood near it. The extensive lawns in front of these curious buildings, which looked as if they had been transported from the Rhine Valley, were thick with startling statuary, and Gordon and I, fresh from

a good sleep at Eastport, a real country town with a real flavor, and knowing we could easily reach Canoe Place Inn by noon on such a cool morning, stopped to view the castle. We found the owner, a delightful man in middle life, with the blue eyes of a child, was a potter. Not only that, but a painter, an inventor, a dreamer, an architect, and a sculptor as well. His vases, which he colored through a secret process, were exquisite, and he showed us the furnaces where he heated his clay in the tower, and a rowboat on the lake behind the castle, composed of cement and wire, which he was mighty proud of, as he had made it with his own hands. A picturesque, charming gentleman, mowing the grass when we wandered in, apparently at peace with all the world, and glad of any casual visitor who evinced an interest in his quaint place with its busy enterprises.

We made Good Ground in three hours of leisurely going, and then the Shinnecock Canal, where I wanted to watch Gordon's face.

For it is here that Nature makes a sudden

and supreme gesture, as if to say: "You thought me rather stupid and commonplace up till now, did n't you? But just see what I can do!" And she lifts her hand, and presses it on the earth, and here, on prosaic Long Island, puts a bit of Scotland! It is a magical change, and for a moment you think you are living in a dream or a fairy-tale. Greener grass I have seldom seen; and then the scrub bay-trees, like gorse, blueberry-bushes, and goldenrod! A wonderland opens before you for several miles, with clean, curving roads running through it like devious highways of the king. Wind-mills extend their arms, and architects have wisely placed here only the type of dwelling that sinks naturally into the landscape. Shinnecock Bay is as blue as the Mediterranean, and on a point to your right a graceful, white lighthouse stands. I could look forever upon this scene. From an airplane the moors must look like a Persian rug, spread across the island through some miracle, fit for a beautiful queen to walk upon. There is only one flaw—the practical telegraph poles should be removed,

or at least hidden in some way. We had camouflage in the war; why not in time of peace?

"By Jove! it 's great!" Gordon said, as I knew he would. "Why did n't you tell me we were coming to this?"

"Because I wanted it to take your breath away, as it has," I answered. And then we fell silent; for if there is one thing I can't endure, it is the kind of friend who raves forever over a sunset or the starry expanse of heaven and gives you no time to think of the wonder itself.

We were to lunch with friends at Shinnecock, another surprise I had for Gordon, who thought we would hurry through this paradise, and make a tramp-like entrance into thrillingly smart Southampton. He was happy over the prospect of several hours in such a spot, as well he might be. I kept from him the fact that I even hoped to be asked to sleep on the moors. "You mean the Ostermoors," said my witty young companion; and I have not forgiven him yet, though in justification he keeps reminding me what an inveterate punster Charles Lamb was said to be.

CHAPTER V

FROM SOUTHAMPTON TO MONTAUK POINT

NOT very many New-Yorkers—or Long-Islanders, for that matter—realize that at Shinnecock Hills, within a stone's-throw of fashionable Southampton, there is a small Indian reservation, primitive Americans elbowing, as it were, with an overcivilized hodgepodge, lending added color to the crazy-quilt of a hectic society. A contact like this is almost unbelievable; yet there it is, and I wonder what the chiefs and squaws would think of the bathing-beach at Southampton if they took the pains to view it, as we did, on a certain Sunday morning. Here was the *dernier cri* in feminine costumes, and church was just out. The chapel is conveniently and thoughtfully placed almost next to the bathing-pavilion, in order, I suppose, that the holy innocents may emerge from one sort of spiritual bath

and step into quite another. A fearless clergyman, the day we were there, had given the idle rich a severe lecture, under which many of them sat in mute unconcern, and then filed out to the glowing sands of pleasure, as though the withering words they had just listened to had never been uttered. Oh, wasted wrath and worse than wasted advice! Yellow umbrellas and pink-and-green and salmon bathing-suits seemed of far more importance than ecclesiastical visions of a solemn day of judgment, and the so-called fashionable world laughed and gossiped and frisked about as of old, before any world war rocked this troubled earth or any pious gentleman dared to speak his mind.

There are many beautiful gardens in Southampton, but I saw only two of them, each lovely in a different way. One was that of Mr. H. H. Rogers, a formal Italian thing of glory, with the sea singing almost up to its very borders, and with nothing between it and Spain but this same plunging, foaming ocean. For the narrow strip of land that begins at Fire Island ends at Shinne-

"The glowing sands of pleasure"

cock Hills, and Southampton triumphantly touches the sea itself and listens to her song all day and night. The other was the less formal garden of Mr. James Breese, back in the town proper, a riot of luxurious beauty, with vistas east and west, north and south, as in Mr. Rogers's garden, and statues and busts and fountains, and a fragrance forever arising out of the clean, opulent earth. Down such garden walks one would love to loiter through the slow summer afternoons, or see the moon spill its silver on quiet nights. The peace of gardens! The assuaging comfort they bring with the noisy world on the other side of their high walls, over which only the green vines clamber and peep!

After the colorful and stiff parade of Southampton, it was soothing to get to quiet Water Mill, only a few miles away, where the dunes rise high, and where Gordon and I, thanks to a lavish hostess, were given a picnic on the beach on a certain evening when the stars were blazing the sky and the moon was a fragment of pearl against deep-blue velvet. If you ever pass through Wa-

ter Mill, be sure that you turn sharply to the right when you come to a house set at the side of a little inlet, and make for the shore about a mile beyond. The sand has formed mighty hillocks here, and far as the eye can see there is a noble coast-line, with spray continually veiling the shore as the first soft snow envelops the world on a December day. A few houses bravely face the thundering sea, and one or two were recently washed away, I was told, in a great storm.

The day after our picnic we went by motor to Easthampton, that lovely old town with one of the finest main streets in America, shadowed by elms, chestnuts, and maples. In the center of it, beyond the great flagstaff, is a quiet little cemetery rolling down to a stream, whereon a swan or two drifts and dreams the hours away, like those sleeping under the hill. It was here that "Home, Sweet Home" was written, and the house where Paine penned his immortal words is still standing, a shingled cottage with old doors and windows and cupboards, now made into a little musuem. John Drew, Augustus Thomas, and

Victor Harris are among those who make their summer homes in Easthampton, and there is a colony of as interesting folk as one could wish to meet. By no means so smart as Southampton, this town has a charm distinctly its own, a rich tone and color like some old volume. And it *is* an old village, for it was settled in 1649. I know of no better place to wander about. There are byways in every direction, and there is always that broad, heavenly, and shadowy main street to come back to. No wonder Paine could write his deathless poem in such a spot!

Amagansett, another old village, as fragrant as fresh hay, lies just beyond, drowsing the long summer hours away, dozing peacefully through lazy afternoons.

And then you reach a poorer hamlet, with the delightful name of Promised Land. We saw a tiny cottage here by the edge of the road that spelt serenity, if ever a house did. It was covered with thick vines, and its three stone chimneys rose like protecting bastions. The clipped lawn told of order and harmony and a sense of

decent pride, and I imagined charming old ladies living here on a patrimony, content with life, happy in a hamlet with such a heavenly name. What a place for the sunset days of one's allotted span!

Until you reach Montauk, this is the last cluster of houses before the point is finally won. Many people had discouraged us from going beyond Easthampton, saying the roads were impossible, if not utterly impassable. But do not be deceived. The cinder-path that begins almost as soon as you are out of Promised Land, and soon develops into a good dirt road, is fine and hard, equally good for foot-farers or motorists. True, it is narrow, and if you are in a car, you will have to watch out for other travelers and turn at the right spot, as trolleys must delay at given sections when there is only a single track. Beyond this there will be no difficulty, and soon you will find yourself entering a locality as bleak as that country described in "Wuthering Heights." The moon must look like this. Gaunt ribs of sand rise on the ocean side, and

"What a place for the allotted days of one's span"

here and there is a lonely coast-guard hut. It is as forlorn as the devastated regions of France, with formations in the dunes like shell-craters. Only the tanks are missing, and the stark lines of telegraph poles make you think of the crosses in Flanders Fields, row on endless row.

There is waving salt grass, and once in a while a pink marshmallow rose will lift its pathetic face in the sun. The sand-dunes take on a purplish tint, and there are purple shadows like miniature caves, with the sea forever chanting and beating its tireless hands upon the lonesome shore. Scrub-pines appear, and then a little forest of scrub-oaks, until you imagine you are in Italy. A lonely railroad-track follows you on the left; and that, with a wireless station farther on, are the only reminders of civilization. You are suddenly and gloriously out of touch with the world; and then you realize that, through the miracle of a modern invention, you can never quite get away from the vast city you have left so far behind you.

The island grows very thin here, and with the

loud ocean on your right, you also have glimpses of Napeague Bay, Fort Pond, and Great Pond on your left. It is a constantly and curiously changing scene through which you wander. One moment you exclaim, "Why, this is Scotland!" and the next there will come a definite dip in the land, and you will discover farmers tilling the soil, and think you are in Connecticut. It is astonishing that so restricted a territory can contain so many shifting scenes.

And now the lighthouse, which has stood on the point one hundred and twenty-three years, gazing with its great eye from the edge of the world out to the limitless ocean. The present keeper has been there nine years, and his assistant told us that last winter, in a heavy storm, they were virtually cut off from the world for three months, and he and the keeper's young daughter trudged through drifts of snow to Promised Land, nine miles away, for groceries and other supplies, and had, as one can imagine, a hard time of it. This young assistant, Mr. Kierstead, had been slightly shell-shocked in the war, and he found

"With its great eye to the limitless ocean"

the quiet life at the point soothing to his nerves.

"But is n't it lonely for you all?" was the inevitable question, asked of every lighthouse-keeper.

"Oh, maybe, a bit; but we love it. And there are plenty of visitors in summer. In winter we can read, and we have a happy time of it."

The quarters where these two families live are as neat as wax, and I can imagine how the fresh salt air helps one's appetite. We grew hungry, seeing a delicious plate of hot cakes on the table.

During the Spanish-American War certain of our troops were camped at Montauk Point, and the spot hummed with soldiers and Sunday visitors. Now it has almost forgotten those busy days, and gone definitely back to its natural calm and peace.

Gordon and I were motored back to Southampton, and there we took a train to town. This was always an anticlimax, for no matter how tired one might be, after footing it here and there, or even after motoring, one had no desire, particularly after a period of exultant freedom, to be-

come part of a common package—a bean, as it were, joggling against other beans in a stuffy smoker or even in a parlor-car.

Of course the ideal way to return would be not in a motor, but in an airplane—exultant freedom magnified a hundredfold, since there is no sensation of aloneness and aloofness to compare with a journey through the air. To get back thus romantically and ecstatically to the workaday world would be the essence of delight. But one cannot ask, and expect to receive, every known form of joy on this prosaic earth; and so any companion I ever had, free from such foolish wishes as mine, was always content to purchase a conventional ticket and get back to New York in a humdrum way.

Montauk Point

CHAPTER VI

AMERICA'S MAD PLAYGROUND, CONEY ISLAND

IN every full-grown man, if he be of the right stuff, there is a human desire to play which, indulged in at the proper intervals, gives us poor humans that balance so necessary if we would keep our sanity. Moreover, it keeps us young and makes us better.

I confess that about once each summer I crave Coney Island, as a child craves candy or a toy balloon. Something steals over me, something whispers in my ear, "This is the very night for a ride to that mad, glad beach, with thousands of other fools. Come, play with me, and be gloriously young again!"

I cannot resist the siren, or whoever it is that thus robs me of what trifling dignity I may have. When the word comes, when the impulse is upon

me, I simply obey; and never yet have I regretted any wild spree at Coney Island.

There are plenty of motors to take one there, if it is too tedious to go by train or boat. They are all over New York, on various corners of Broadway; and the magnetic call of the "barker" who lures folk into his whirling chariot is loud along that sparkling thoroughfare on midsummer evenings. All you have to do is pay your dollar, or whatever the rate is now, and jump aboard.

You are whirled through the vast city in the twinkling of an eye, and over into Brooklyn; and soon you find yourself tumbling along the motor parkway where, as a boy, I used to ride a wheel and miraculously escape every truck that came along, and never dreamed of danger. In and out of hurrying traffic we all used to speed; and then one day they built a side path for the cyclists alone. Then there were so many of us—we seemed to multiply like rabbits in those halcyon days—that they built a path on the other side, so that there was one-way traveling only. This, I recall that we all thought, robbed the

sport of some of its zest. The element of danger had been entirely eliminated. It was as though you took the jam off our bread.

Youth, youth, that fears nothing! How wonderful you are! Though I used to go at a terrific rate on my bicycle, and fear no man, to-day I confess that even behind the best chauffeur, I have a little tremor of the heart. If I drove the machine myself, maybe I would not be so foolishly afraid—(yet is it being foolishly afraid?); for they tell me that sooner or later every driver will get the speed mania, and take chances on the most crowded thoroughfare or along the shining, empty road, though it turn and twist every few rods.

Everybody seems to be going to, or coming from, Coney Island on, say, a July or August evening. Everyone is, or has been, making a night of it. And soon you see in the dim distance, like so many fallen stars, the lights of the playground, shining like diamonds on the beach. Or is it a cascade of wonder tossed up on the shore by opulent mermaids—necklaces that they have

wearied of, golden bracelets that have tired them, glowing gems that they once wore in their hair, and now throw nonchalantly on the coast for the delight of us poor mortals? At any rate, there they are—those gleaming miles of phosphorescence, part of the wonderful city of magic in the midst of which you will soon be playing like a child of ten.

Cars, cars everywhere, with men calling to you that their little foot of earth is the best place to park your machine—if you are running your own. If you are in one of those public conveyances that accept anybody with the money for a passenger, you feel that you are just that much more one of the vast multitude that is scrambling for an entrance to this place of simple pleasure; and you are glad, as I always am, that you have not the responsibility of a motor to add to the troubles of this world.

There is a certain feeling of opulence in purchasing one long ticket at a window which will admit you, as it is variously punched or torn, to every show inside; and this understanding of the

"The wonderful city of magic"

weakness of human nature is only one more manifestation of the success of Coney Island. Whoever conceived the idea of inviting patrons to buy just *one* ticket for a round sum, is as knowing as the pundits of old; and my hat is off to his massive brain. I wish I had the wit thus to read the heart of my fellow man. To give up a dollar, let us say, knowing that you will be taken care of for the rest of the evening; that all the sideshows will be an open book to you, without the annoyance of bothering further with coupons—that seems to me the perfection of Yankee foresight, the best device of a system that has been studied minutely to discover how to ease the burdens of the tired public.

It was the late Frederick Thompson and his partner, Dundy, who invented Luna Park—two young men who ran the Hippodrome when it was first opened, and who had a genius for knowing what people wanted in the way of entertainment. Luna Park is but a slice of Coney Island; but within its confines may be found almost any known form of innocent amusement. Roller-

coasters, merry-go-rounds, swings, shooting-galleries, mystic Moorish mazes, elephants, camels, hot dogs—by which is meant bologna sausages—peanuts, popcorn, dance-floors, jazz—all these, and many another bit of life's make-believe may be had and enjoyed if one has provided himself with a long, long ticket, or will take the trouble to dig down into his pocket for the necessary nickel or dime.

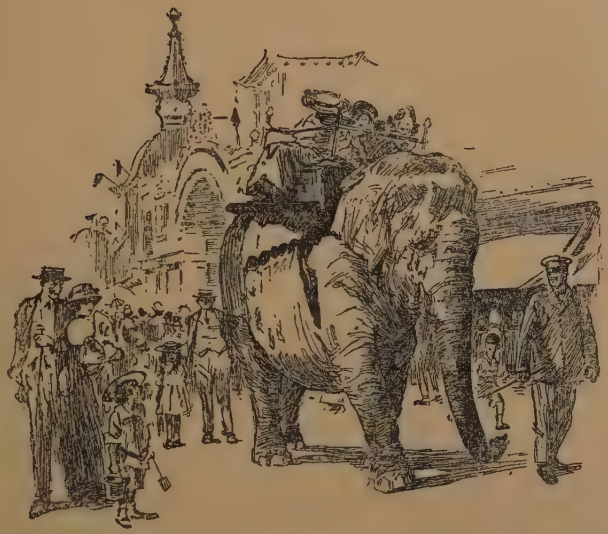
I have seen men and women of most serious mien enter Luna Park, determined, judging by their countenances, not to lose their dignity; yet they have emerged from some indulgence in the spirit of carnival, having been wise enough, as Stevenson put it, to make fools of themselves. They have had their photographs taken in some grotesque attitude—on a camel, perhaps—and waited, childlike, while the film was finished, so that they could take it home as a souvenir of a happy evening; and doubtless they have pasted it in a scrapbook which they will keep forever, inscribed with the date of their dissipation, their fall from grace, and hand it down to their chil-

dren as a sign that grown-ups can, once in a while, lose their solemnity and be all the more human for it.

Coney Island is one vast slot machine; and if there is a word that describes it better than another, it is *movement*. Everything shakes, or glides, or shimmies, or jumps, or tumbles, or twists—nothing ever stands still. That would be unthinkable. The American people love noise and confusion, and the more of it they get the better they like it. Witness the success of our cabarets. Coney Island might stand as a symbol of our national consciousness. Its riot and constant gestures are the expression of what the multitude like best. It is sublimated madness; but it is typical of our easy forgetting, our ability to throw the serious business of life to the winds in the twinkling of an eye, when it is necessary. I have never seen any ill-humor at Coney Island, even in the hectic days before prohibition. The crowds go there, determined to have a good time. They do not intend to be cheated of their happiness. An easy manner pervades them all, a slap

on the back by a total stranger is never resented, and everyone smiles, everyone laughs. It is the thing to do. As Pollyanna was the "glad" book, so Coney Island is the "glad" place. Your worries will not be tolerated there.

Why people should pay money to be made fools of is one of the eternal mysteries. There is a certain spot in one park where a lady's skirts are literally blown over her head the instant she passes a gate—having paid ten cents for the privilege. A gust of wind which she knows not of sends her gown upward; and this would be distressing enough in itself, but a greater horror confronts her. She hastily adjusts her skirt, and then hears gales of laughter, looks ahead of her in the direction of the sound, and sees row after row of people who have already passed through the ordeal, and are sitting there waiting for the next victim. Having been made ludicrous themselves—having had their straw hats blown off, if they are men—they love nothing better than to watch *your* confusion. And there they are, cruelly awaiting you. But you are not angry.



"A slice of Coney Island"

You can't be. That would be fatal, and entirely out of the spirit of the place. You smile a sickish smile, plunge forward as best you may and join the others safely on the other side. You are now like the lad who has just been initiated. How eagerly you pounce upon the next poor fool, to give him a taste of the anguish you have experienced!

Suddenly, having had your fill of this laughter, you see a mass of smooth boards close by—a shining hill, almost perpendicular, down which dozens of men and women are tumbling—perpetual motion again; yes, and perpetual emotion. They land, after a swift fall, in a dry whirlpool of rings, which revolve rapidly in every direction. But one cannot escape these rings. They are contiguous, and they never cease whirling. If you are fortunate enough to leave one, and think yourself free at last, you find yourself immediately upon another; and thus the game goes merrily on until you are pushed by the latest comer out into a sort of trench, looking and feeling idiotic and dizzy, and again facing a group

of people who have been through the agony and are now convulsed with mirth at your distress.

And you paid to have this laughter greet you! You went into it with your eyes open, and therefore you have no one to blame but yourself. Such is the good-nature of Americans, that I saw one young fellow, who had not dreamed of the whirling wheels when he took his first tumble, immediately take out his pocket comb and a tiny mirror and pretend to make a hurried toilet as he turned and twisted on his uncomfortable seat. That made the crowd watching him his everlasting slave, and he came out triumphant. He had seen that the joke was on himself, and he had the wit to make a monkey of himself as he was tossed about.

Undismayed, you seek the next bit of fun. You wouldn't stop now for the world. For you have been innoculated with the germ of the spirit of carnival, and there is no hope for you. The Barrel of Love—yes, of course you'll try that!

So you allow yourself—having given up another coupon—to be strapped within a barrel,

while someone else is bound on the opposite side, facing you, two miserable, concave figures. Then both are twirled and twisted and rolled and heaved and dumped this way and that—again, of course, to the accompaniment of laughter on the other side of the ropes which separate you from the happy mob. You almost experience sea-sickness. But what of that? This is a night of complete abandon, and you must not be ill now; for the scenic railway, the merry-go-round, the dark tunnel and a dozen other haunts of laughter yet await your coming. But the Barrel of Love does seem a bit too much for anyone. Looping the Loop is easier.

I once saw a mother take her infant child in the latter. Maybe she believed in preparedness, and thus early determined that her offspring should become accustomed to astounding pleasures. He would grow up to be a Coney Island fiend, undoubtedly. At any rate, there the child was, in its mother's arms, little knowing the dip and whirl that awaited it. Criminal? Perhaps. But part again of Coney Island's marvelous and

non-understandable psychology. For the relief of the reader, I would like to say that I stood at the foot of the Loop to see if the child survived when the wild rush was over. It had. I turned away much easier in my mind, but still unable to comprehend such a parent. She was a new kind of mortal to me. Doubtless her child will grow to a robust manhood, and, at the ripe age of ninety-two or thereabouts, expire quietly in his bed.

The Rolling Waves attract you next, perhaps. On a floor that perpetually heaves through some clever electrical contrivance, and which is painted green to resemble the tossing ocean, chairs are sent forth, like ships from a wharf. Two people sit in these, and one seeks to guide the chair around the "sea" and try his best not to bump into another "ship." It is great fun, and there are always loud shrieks and yells. When you miraculously come back to port, the attendant always suggests another trip; and rather than get out of your straps, you stay comfortably in. Thus do the dimes disappear at Coney Island!

It takes strength of character to resist a "barker." It is his profession to urge and cajole. He has been a close student of human nature. He sizes you up at a glance. He knows how to lure you into his net, whether he is selling seats on the scenic railway or bidding you see the very fattest woman in all the world. His megaphone is loud in the land of Coney Island, and never does his rasping voice cease for an instant. Somewhere he is always calling to you, and his eloquent appeals, whether in verse or prose, win you in the end. I heard one "barker" cry, on behalf of his vaudeville entertainment,

> "Come, buy your tickets, and step in line—
> I'm sure the show will be very fine!"

I could not resist so natural a poet—the antithesis of the *verse libre* school, which has so often annoyed us all. They should go to Coney Island, and learn something of scansion from this inspired "barker."

Merry-go-rounds—carousels is a more important way of naming them—have always fasci-

nated me. I like trying to capture the brass ring, even now; and when, as so often happens at a place like Coney Island, where the crowds are indeed dense, I am forced to take an inside seat, which makes it impossible for me to reach for the rings as we whirl past, I am consumed with grief. I like the mechanical spanking steed on the outer rim—those balky horses that leap and plunge—not the quiet and unromantic carriages near the music-box. They seem to have been put there for grandma and grandpa when they bring the children out in the afternoon. No! I always crave the exciting outside edge. And oh, the thrill of getting the coveted brass circle, and winning another ride for nothing! When will one be too old to lose this feeling of joy! I wonder.

I have always said I would know I had crossed the Rubicon when I could go on with my breakfast and let the morning letters wait. I would like to add that I will know that my youth has definitely gone when I no longer am willing to leap on a merry-go-round and strive valiantly for

"Toboggans that splash"

the brass ring. Even to the tune of "Nearer, My God, to Thee," which was actually played by the organ when we were twirled about on a flashing carousel one night, I can still enjoy the journey; and I pity with all my heart any man or woman who cannot.

Also I like that sickening sensation when the car on the scenic railway plunges, in sudden darkness, down a sharp declivity, and seems about to leave the track. I like the yells of terror from my feminine neighbors—I know they are half put on; and I like the girl who uses the imminent danger as an excuse to lean closer to her lover and have his stalwart arms hold her safely in. I like to see humanity out on a holiday, nibbling its popcorn, chewing its gum, weighing itself, buying its salt-water taffy, dancing its tired legs off, flirting outrageously, gaping before side-shows, slipping down toboggans that finally splash in turbulent water—in fact, making a complete fool of itself. A shop-girl and her sailor beau is a beautiful sight to me. His dare-devil extravagance, and her feminine clinging to his side in the

surge of a place like Coney Island—what could be more healthily young and delightful?

I like to see people staring at a certain booth where candy, for some undiscovered reason, is sold in a form that resembles lamb chops, roast beef, and sausages! What brain conceived this curious idea? Why should delicious candy be any more delicious under a strange disguise of red meat? By what process of reasoning is it supposed to take on sweeter qualities, thus camouflaged? (I had vowed never to use that word again; but one can't escape it!)

I suppose it is the old P. T. Barnum theory of mob psychology: people like to be fooled. And, having been successfully fooled themselves, they like nothing better than seeing someone else fooled. We pay to be made ridiculous; and, in our good-natured Yankee way, we do not complain when we discover that the joke has been on us. No, indeed! We take pleasure in observing the next fellow's discomfiture, followed immediately and inevitably by his fatuous grin.

Corn on the cob must be eaten at Coney Island.

Your visit is not complete unless you partake of this succulent food. Likewise you must buy a "hot dog." And always you crave another. The real way to go to this vast playground is to arrive about dinner-time, and enter one of the many good restaurants along the main thoroughfare. In some of them you will find as bright a cabaret as in any Broadway haunt, and the food, too, will be equally fine—and probably less expensive. But do not over-eat; for one of the great pleasures of this racketty, rollicking resort, consists in nibbling at this and that dainty all during the evening. One's appetites—physical and mental—never seem to be satisfied when one is visiting Coney Island. Both the brain and the body are stuffed on such an expedition, and to such an extent that it is a wonder we do not die when the trip is over. Vendors are importunate at every turning, and as glib as the "barkers." They, too, are difficult to resist; and the odor of fragrant fresh corn is, to me, a temptation always.

What is there in aiming at a target that is

so irresistible? The shooting-galleries are forever popular; and once in a while, when some lad comes along who has Buffalo Bill's unerring eye, a crowd will gather to watch his crack shots; and all but the owner of the booth will urge him on. For glass is expensive, and it is not always easy to replace the ducks and globes that are shattered by such a fellow, who is often fresh from the army and likes to "show off" before his best girl. Small boys look on enviously, praying for the day when they can do likewise, and hear the little bell sound that tells of the hitting of the bull's-eye; and their idolatrous gaze follows him down the street when he nonchalantly strolls away, his girl on his arm, looking for new make-believe worlds to conquer.

The monstrous swings may prove the next magnet in one's peripatetic fever—swings that sweep in all directions from a huge center pole, and give one a real sensation of freedom. But more than likely the Bump-the-Bumps will win you first.

Huddled in with about nine other idiots—

"You wouldn't stop now for the world"

the more of you, the better—you find yourself holding your hat between your knees, and bobbing about in a circular car this way and that; zigzagging, terror-stricken, over innumerable obstacles; lurching, falling, screaming, scrambling, growing dizzier and dizzier, and finally doing it all over again, though your hat is crushed and your arms are black and blue.

Madness? Yes. Midsummer madness. And it takes hold of us, this wild insanity, as inevitably as the warm months wheel round. Coney Island is a blessed escape from the boredom of routine; a merciful concoction that has all the effect of a dozen highballs with none of the disastrous next-day anticlimax. Most of us need relaxation, and need it badly, living, as we do, in the whirligig of New York, at high tension and top speed. Our inhibitions disappear at such piquant summer resorts; and the psychologists, who are so learned in the matter of poor mortals letting off steam, would be the first to recommend dear old mad, glad Coney to the perennially weary busi-

ness man who does n't have sense enough to know when to quit living on a schedule.

It is interesting to note, every year, the changes that take place at Coney. The public would become satiated if novelties were not devised, if new fillups were not invented to take the mind from the world of humdrum affairs. What seemed wonderful last season may be absolutely out of date this summer. And just as a clever cook prepares a new dish every now and then to tempt the palate of the master of the household, so the men behind the scenes of America's mad playground wrack their brains for fresh ideas. Catchy slogans must be written; and sometimes these alone are sufficient to cause some old device to take on a new lease of life. It is as though a woman dyed her hair and appeared younger this year through the illusion.

It is no small task to keep up the standard; and if anyone thinks it is nothing to get out signs that will attract the public's keen eye, let him try his hand at Steeplechase or Luna Park. Here is a world all its own, just as the motion-

picture field is a place apart; and a certain type of mind is necessary if one is to be successful here. The art of entertaining the crowd—the gum-chewing, blasé crowd that has ceased to be thrilled at old melodramas and now craves the more exciting food of the movies—is not something that can be learned in a day, or a week, or even in a year. And I am not misusing the sacred word "art." For I am conscious of the serious problem that confronts those who would seek to make the people laugh—or even smile. What a responsibility to be a clown, and feel that at every performance you must evoke that loud whirlwind of mirth, or else go down to disaster as an entertainer! The very thought is enough to chill the blood of a sensitive artist; but because a real clown *is* an artist, and therefore keeps within himself forever the heart of a child, with all a child's enthusiasm, he goes on and, childlike, draws the multitude to him.

When the so-called Blue Laws are spoken of, I always smile. How little comprehension of humanity and its sorrows, the framers of this

wretched legislation have! Do they not realize that life, to the poor, is not always beautiful? That long hours behind a counter or running an elevator, or doing any of the other utilitarian acts so many of us must perform, hardly makes for happiness? The grind of life must be offset by a healthy dissipation—an indulgence, if you wish to call it that. There must be outlets for suppressed energy and wholesome desires. I doubt if any of the sour-visaged Blue Law men and women have ever been to Coney Island; for they probably think of it as an immoral, tempestuous spot, unworthy a visit. A few days there would do them good.

To be prim is not to be dignified; and I know of nothing so undesirable as spurious virtue, accompanied inevitably by sanctimonious smirks. Give me, in preference, the raucous laughter of underbred but healthily happy crowds who, forgetting for a brief interval the sorrows of this world—made more sorrowful by the inclusion in it of Blue Law jack-asses—let themselves go, in such a spot as delirious, delectable Coney Island.

CHAPTER VII

SAG HARBOR AND THE NORTH SHORE

ONE might liken Long Island to a slice of bread cut lengthwise from a Vienna loaf. Many people, when they eat bread, leave the crust and go only after the middle. But once you decide to put your teeth into Long Island, as it were, the process would be reversed: you would go definitely for the outer rim, all those fascinating spots along the shore, both north and south, and leave the interior almost entirely alone. Yet now and then there is a fine plum in the middle, for there are lakes and bays that seem to have fallen, as in that sentimental song on Ireland, from the very sky, and tiny towns have sprung up naturally on their edges.

Such a village is Sag Harbor, leaning out over Shelter Island Sound, with Noyack Bay on its

left, a shadowy, quiet place of dreams, with curious old houses that remind one of New England in its most romantic precincts—houses that have stood for generations and heard the noisy world rush by. And it is curious how, in a little American town like this one will run across a Chinese laundryman who has set up his shop far from his native land. A Hop Sing next to a garage on the main street of such a village! An anachronism that one finds it hard to understand. There are old fishermen here and roundabout who have never been to New York, no, not once in all their lives; yet they would tell one they had had a pleasant time of it, and would not count the years as lost which they have spent in this venerable village.

An ancient, tired town by the water's-edge,
Dreaming away its life in the afternoon.
A shadowy, weary ghost behind a hedge,
Under the light of the moon.

A sad, old-fashioned woman in a shawl,
Behind drawn curtains when the twilight nears.
A stiff, prim matron at life's carnival,
Yet with something that endears.

Ernest and I had delightful friends at Sag Harbor, whither we went by train one perfect morning, the kind of friends who, knowing they were not to be at home on this particular day, nevertheless left word with Sarah, their marvelous cook, to prepare a luncheon for us that we knew would be fit for Lucullus, and bade us stop without fail at their cottage and make it our own.

And we did. They lived on Hog's Neck, just across a little bridge, and the water kissed their lawn, so that they could go out for a swim directly from the house and sit down to luncheon in their bathing-suits. They had a view that would delight the soul of any one, and I can think of nothing finer than to spend honeyed afternoons on their veranda, doing nothing at all.

We left a note of thanks for Frank and Bertha Case, and we wanted to embrace Sarah, so lavishly had she fed us; but the afternoon was moving on, and there was some walking to be done before we reached a place where we could sleep that night.

Hog's Neck is real country, and the road leads straight to a primitive ferry. Upon the rocking little craft perhaps three automobiles, by much manœuvering, could huddle, and about a dozen passengers; and when I asked the boys who ran it how often they made the trip, they answered in all honesty, "Oh, as often as any one signals from the shore." The strip of water that separates Hog's Neck from Shelter Island is scarcely a stone's throw in width, and it is like crossing a miniature English Channel to get over. The water, choppy, and trying to be exceedingly disagreeable and rough, reminds one of a kitten imitating a tiger. If we had been in a little backwoods region of Georgia we could n't have found a more archaic ferry or one more enchantingly simple.

The shores are deeply wooded on both sides, and here Long Island bears another aspect, and one can scarcely believe that this is part of the same island that is low and flat and dusty and at times fashionably foolish, or foolishly fashionable, as one prefers. This is one of the great

"Water is to a landscape what eyes are to a human face"

charms of the place—that it is so different in different localities, and the unexpected greets one at every turn. Who was it that said that water, to a landscape, is what eyes are to a human face? There are so many beautiful blue eyes on Long Island that the wanderer is always sure of expression and animation in the countenance of the country.

If one should wish to leave Sag Harbor by another route than ours, I can recommend a back road, leaving the main street of the town on the left, that takes one to Southampton and all the points in that direction. Noyack Bay and its snug inlets and, later, Little Peconic Bay can be seen through the thick trees, and one can ride or walk here without meeting a soul. Once in a while there will be a cluster of farm-houses, and, miraculously, a shop of some sort, like a rose in a forest. But these will be but momentary hints of civilization. I trudged this road once with Peb, the companion of many a loafing trip, and we both said we had seldom come upon a more happily sequestered trail, and I remember we

wondered why motorists did not use it more frequently. But of course then it would quite lose its charm, and simply become like any other thoroughfare, a scenic railway for the shouting multitude. I recall a turning where we were in doubt as to which way to proceed, so we asked a farmer who happened at that moment to come out of his woodshed, delighted, I think, to see a human face. There was one other house in the neighborhood, and we asked him where we were.

"Oh, you can call this Skunk's Corners, I guess. It ain't got no name." And then he politely directed us, and told us, as he leaned over the fence, seemingly eager to go on talking, that he was one of those many farmers who had never had the courage to make their way to the big city.

But this road was not ours to-day. We were going across to the north shore, and after the first ferry we knew there would be another. Shelter Island is full of romantic suggestion. Almost in the center of it there is a tangled old graveyard, a veritable Spoon River cemetery, with tumbling headstones placed here many decades ago, at a

Shelter Island

period when parents evidently opened the family Bible when a child came into the world and selected the name for it that the finger first fell upon; for here sleeps many a Moses, Esther, Samuel, and Daniel, and there were likewise such quaint, old-fashioned names as Abbie, Calvin, Jemima, Hepzibah, Caleb, Phoebe, and Asenath.

At Shelter Island Heights there stands a rather grand hotel that seems to be filled all summer, for there are good fishing and sailing along these delightful shores, and many large craft seek safety here during storms, and thus is accounted for the island's beautifully practical name. City people fish from the piers, and Ernest and I saw dozens of catches within five or ten minutes. Indeed, it was so easy that it soon wearied us, if not the fishermen, for I prefer a little more uncertainty in any undertaking. The whitecaps tossed on the bay, and the water fairly churned and seethed as we waited for the larger ferry. Down on our right lay Manhanset, where there used to be a fine hotel until it was burned to ashes about three years ago. Now there is a club-house in its place.

You can reach Greenport in about five minutes, a sleepy town at the railroad's end, a full stop, a period, as it were; yet there are snatches of a sentence beyond it, and if the words do not piece together properly, that is because few people take the trouble to hear them.

Now, Ernest is an actor, and he has also been on the screen. Therefore I was not surprised on this out-of-the-way and tossing ferry to have a total stranger come up to him and tell him how much he had liked him in a certain part. An actor never quite gets away from the world; he is everybody's friend if he is at all popular, and even his profile is not his own. But I was hardly prepared for a second recognition, coming so soon after the first, when we walked up from the wharf through a street in Greenport. Here a young man of pleasant mien most cordially hailed him by name, and took us both immediately into his general store (though I did not matter at all), where everything from jewelry and clocks to plows and rubber gloves was for sale. Trade was a trifle dull that afternoon, and Ned was lonesome,

no doubt, and full of talk. He turned out to be the former dresser of stars like Nat Goodwin and Shelley Hull, and when these two actors had died, he left the theater, though he loved it, married a motion-picture actress, and opened a shop in this far-off town. To see an actor in the flesh on this quiet street brought back with a rush the scent and memory of scenery and cosmetics, and he just could not help dragging Ernest in and talking over old stage-times. One could sense a latent and wistful craving for the theater, though he pretended to be enamoured of his trade. Yet he allowed customers to wait, I noticed, while he chatted on with his important friend. Thus do our scenes shift, and we find new sets in which to go on with our performance, such as it is, whenever the Prompter directs us.

Greenport is full of ship-chandlers, and tall masts rock in the bay. In the winter-time the town virtually depends upon scallops and oysters for its livelihood, and the fishermen go out in hordes and come back laden with spoils. In November there is always plenty of duck-shoot-

ing around Greenport, and it is no extraordinary achievement for one man to bring home two hundred birds a day. When a town is a hundred miles from New York, the people do not run in and out very often. A year may pass before they go up to the city. And so they make their own lives in their own locality; and now with the long arm of the motion-picture theaters reaching into every nook and corner of the world, there is no excuse for lonely evenings. These theaters are patronized to the point of suffocation, and on the enchanting moonlit night when we should have walked down country roads Ernest and I, through force of habit, went to view what turned out to be an atrocious film. We noted the long line of cars outside the hall—as long as a string at the opera, truly—and thought again of the responsibility of the makers of the unspoken drama. But what a story we sat through, with only one beautiful woman's face to redeem it! We were not a little ashamed of ourselves for sitting there in the darkness, for one of the tragedies of living in a great city is

the fact that seldom can we view the moon as she should be seen. "That pale maiden," as Shelley called her, requires, like all magnificent things, the right frame, the right setting, for a perfect revelation of her loveliness. In the country the wide expanse around us gives the opportunity we need to see her charms. The long, narrow corridors of town streets half conceal her wonder, and too soon she sails over the roof-tops and behind the clustered chimney-pots when we look up from some crowded thoroughfare, hoping for a glimpse of her serenity. Moreover, smoke may rise, like a veil, and the moon, unaware of our eagerness, may coquettishly hide behind it. She should know that she is hardly the type of woman, though she is very old, who requires artificial aids to set off her glory.

I often wonder if those who live in the country are aware of the riches they possess in such abundance. A moonlight night in July or August is anything but lovely in the city. Out where the hills rise or the plains expand or water whispers, the world is drenched in a cascade of

beauty, and sometimes the magic is such that it makes the heart ache. Only for an instant does the moonlight rest on the iron streets, but for long hours it floods the valleys where the country folk are privileged to dwell, and on many a cool cottage it tumbles in lavish Niagaras of peace. Yet "in such a night" we sat in a stuffy movie!

Orient Point is the real period on Long Island's north shore, just as Montauk Point thus punctuates the south shore. The next morning Ernest and I determined to get there. Never was there a more perfect day, with diamonds dropping on the sound and in the bay. Just after East Marion is reached there is a strip of land so narrow that Orient Harbor and the wide sound almost meet. In heavy storms the waves all but cross the road, and sometime we may have an Orient Island, beginning with Terry Point and extending the few miles eastward. A heavy stone wall delays the seemingly inevitable separation, but it may crumble in a gale of violence and cause Orient Point to be lonelier even than it now is.

For the hotel is vacant—a long, low, brown building as forlorn as a deserted railroad. Its closed eyes tell the passer-by it is sleeping in the shadows, and so few motorists get out this far that there is nothing to disturb its slumbers. It is a pity that they will not push toward this region, for the farm-lands are lovely, and the clean little homes are in refreshing contrast to some of the statelier mansions one can grow so weary of.

We were told of Hallock's model farm, with its overhead system of irrigation, run by a man of ideas and his three sons. Potatoes and Brussels sprouts are the chief vegetables raised, and it is a sight to see long rows of plants with apparently endless lines of pipe above them, with clever arrangements for the turning on of water. The extensive farm runs to the edge of Gardiner's Bay, where the owner has his own wharf, his own boats for transporting his crops direct to the markets of New York. Another young farmer in this neighborhood, where the soil is rich and fertile, earned, the legend runs, upward of thirty thousand dollars in one season; and if this is

true and I am unconsciously creating a boom in real estate, I hope I shall not spoil the country for those already happily established there. Both Orient and East Marion are fine little villages, and I would not care to see them ruined by a sudden influx of passionate pilgrims determined to grow rich and stay forever.

The path to the point is much like that on the south shore, narrow and crooked; and when you arrive at the tip of the land, the sense of being monarch of all you survey comes over you thrillingly. In the blue distance lies Plum Island, with Fort Terry like a sleeping lion upon it; and in between the brownish-red lighthouse, resting, apparently, on a single rock, yet impervious to the crashing waves.

Some campers had pitched a tent on the lonesome shore of the point, and no doubt fared well, with fresh vegetables and fruit easily purchasable roundabout, and all the fish, and more, they could catch in the sea.

Near East Marion is St. Thomas's home for city children, where seventy-five youngsters can

be accommodated at one time. They come in relays every two weeks, and go back to town brown and ruddy, plump and spruce.

The next town to Greenport of any size is the beautiful old town of Southold, which, five years ago, celebrated its two hundred and fiftieth anniversary with a pageant during several days of festivity. The Rev. John Youngs came from England three hundred years ago and built the first house in Southold. This ancient building is still standing, just off the main street, and it was a German innkeeper, a man who had been in Southold twenty-three years, who directed us to it. When people settle in this charming village, you see, they generally remain; and it is no wonder, for the broad avenues are sheltered by tremendous arching trees, and quiet broods here, and peace is the town's best companion. The Presbyterian minister has also shepherded his flock for twenty-three years, and the ivy-grown cemetery, like the one on Shelter Island, is a perpetual reminder of vanished days, with Mehetable, Temperance, Lorenzo, Salter, Dency, Abi-

jah, Harmony, Arminda, Abner, Susa, Thaddeus, Erastus, and China (doubtless the son of an old sea-captain) all resting serenely while the world wags along. And a certain Samuel, so his tombstone informed us, was "gathered to his fathers like a shock of corn fully ripe."

As Ernest and I passed out of it on our way to Cutchogue (which sounds like a sneeze, but is really a nice little town), we heard Caruso's voice coming from a phonograph in a poor man's home, a modern note, literally, in a quaint old village that has snuggled under its trees these many years.

We shall always hold Southold in specially happy remembrance, for it was there while sitting on the porch of the inn, that a young man, overhearing us speak of our walking trip, straightway offered, if we felt tired, to take us on to the next village in his runabout; and when we declined, with thanks, his unexpected offer, we discovered that he made his suggestion despite the fact that in a short time he was going to take a charming young lady riding in the opposite di-

"Caruso's voice coming from a phonograph"

rection. Courtesy to two strangers could surely go no further, and when we saw him dash happily away with loveliness beside him, we certainly wished him well. But a town as nice as Southold would be sure to contain just such nice folk.

After we had left Southold and walked several miles, we stopped under a tree to refresh ourselves. Few motors were out on this lovely afternoon, and we were in no hurry at all. Ernest is English, and though we had had a delicious luncheon at Southold, he craved his tea, and began to ruminate on the lovely inns of England, where one could always drop in and get some bread and cheese and bitter beer, if nothing else. The mere mention of these delicacies made my mouth water.

"There is nothing to do," I said to my reminiscent friend, "except to press on to Riverhead, maybe stealing or begging a ride; for there's not a place along here where we can get even a snack."

Indeed, the road was a canonical one, with

little to interest us save now and then a clump of beautiful trees. I was hot and dusty, too, and suddenly, for no reason at all, but prompted, no doubt, by the same imp that had lured us into the movies, I wanted to see a New York paper. I wanted it, I suppose, because I knew I could not get it; and Ernest began to laugh at the strings that still held me to the city, country pilgrim though I pretended to be. And he reminded me of that line of Hazlitt's, in the essay "On Going a Journey," "I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it."

"Ah," I answered, "but does n't he also speak of the advantages of walking alone? Talkative companions, he held, were—"

"I won't speak all the rest of the way, if that 's how you—and Hazlitt—feel," Ernest answered, with a smile in the corner of his mouth; and though later I begged for his clever conversation, he was adamant and would not converse at all until we got to a cross-roads near Mattituck. Here was an inn, not comparable with the Eng-

lish taverns, of course, where people "met to talk," a sign informed us, punning outrageously.

"The very place to break your silence," I suggested to my friend; and, laughing, we went in for tea.

Two young ladies had a table near us, and I gathered from such scraps of their conversation as came to us that they were librarians, out on a jaunt also, but in a car. They left the room first, and Ernest and I, sitting by the window, could see them as they stepped into the smallest insect of the road I have ever beheld—nothing, literally, but a child's express-wagon, with a home-made attachment in the nature of a steering-wheel, and a mysterious little engine concealed somewhere which caused the wagon to vibrate down the road. They rattled off, their tiny suitcase on the back, as happy, apparently, as we. They saw our patronizing smiles as they went down the path, and smiled back good-naturedly, not at all flirtatiously. I suppose they guessed we were laughing at their makeshift conveyance,

but they had the air of being used to that sort of thing and seemed not a whit embarrassed at what we thought.

An hour or so later, riding in a fine motor because we had dared to ask a lift, we encountered these girls on the road. They had had engine trouble, and, recognizing us, blushed with mortification. I suppose they imagined we were in our own car, and we were just snobbish enough to like them to think so.

Our triumph was short-lived, however. Two miles or so farther on, our host dropped us, as he turned to the right and our path lay straight ahead. And it was not long before we heard a strange rattle behind us, and those gay librarians sailed by us, waving their handkerchiefs and calling out, "Say, who's lucky now?" It was we who were humiliated as they faded into the landscape, going, I should say, not fewer than twenty-five miles an hour in their homely little box-car, like so much pretty freight. But just before they disappeared, and knowing, perhaps, that they

Riverhead

would never see us again, one of them blew us a kiss—yes, fearlessly she did it, this prim librarian off on a summer holiday!

In Riverhead there is a lovely little garden which the motorist will be sure to miss. That is one of the compensations of walking—you come upon spots of beauty almost accidentally. For instance, had I not gone into a chemist's shop for some tooth-paste and, in coming out, looked down the street, I would never have caught a glimpse of water that beckoned me from the road. A private dwelling stood at the intersection of two paths, and at first I was afraid I was trespassing; but no signs deterred my progress, and soon I came to this miniature Cliff Walk, surrounding a lake at the river's head, with a dam flowing toward the village, and flowers blooming in rich profusion all about. The backs of several charming houses looked out upon this enchanting enclosure, and along the narrow way moved young lovers in happy pairs. Riverhead itself is nothing but a stereotyped, dull town, with

a big jail, a monument or two, and several conventional hotels; but this spot lies like a jewel on its breast.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MIDDLE OF THE SLICE

WE had intended, on another jaunt, to go from Riverhead to Wading River, touching the villages roundabout and getting glimpses of the Sound in all its lavish color, and working our way to Oyster Bay. This time I was with Peb, and once more the weather could not have been finer—crystal clear in the morning, yet warm, with now and then a haze; for we were deep in August, and the world sometimes drew a veil around itself on these torrid afternoons.

But the road from Riverhead was anything but exciting. It led us to a wide, bleak, dusty, undeveloped, seemingly endless highway, and we grew mighty weary of our tramping. There is no sense in trying to make headway when one feels like this. The map had not told us how stupid this region was to be; so we made up our minds

we would hail the first passer-by on wheels and crave the blessing of a lift. To get to a town was the only wise thing to do. There we could loiter about in the shade, and perhaps reach the water and take delight in looking on long, sandy stretches of beach.

But travelers on wheels evidently knew this forlorn and scraggly precinct and would have none of it. I don't recall, in all our journeying along main roads, that there were ever fewer cars rolling by us. However, after we had been making the best of it for several miles, a man came along in a handsome car, and we looked longingly at the empty back seat of his machine, and hailed him politely. Instead of pausing, he took on added speed, and whizzed forward in such haste that he left us railing at him in a cloud of thick dust. I hope he had a breakdown or that the village constable arrested him for speeding, for I never wanted a ride more, and I was parched with thirst. It is n't pleasant to contemplate such a selfish soul when one is footsore and hot and hungry all at once.

"We grew mighty weary"

But our next motorist, if one cares to call a butcher in a cart by so high-toned a name, was far more human, even though his business was the unpleasant one of killing cattle. He took us aboard with an exceeding warmth of spirit. Maybe he was lonesome; but he said anywhere we wanted to go, he 'd take us there. We liked him for that,—who would n't?—and when the road forked, and he slowed down to let us decide whether we wanted to go on to Wading River or continue with him to Smithtown, we of course told him Smithtown was good enough for any sane traveler, particularly as it was his village, and he had praised it as I have heard few residents praise their own birthplace. Smithtown was, according to him, the finest little place on the whole island, and we would n't be making any mistake if we spent the night there. Hotels? Of course; several of them, and he, being an old inhabitant, would take us personally to which ever inn we chose, and make sure we were put up comfortably. A thriving place, a most progressive town, full of nice people. Oh, yes,

Smithtown was O. K., and he did n't care who heard him say so, and he 'd tell the world. He did n't mean to be boastful, but—

Thus he rambled proudly on as we drove through desolate country, and almost wished we had gone our own way. We came at last to the entrance to Camp Upton, now almost deserted of soldiers, but with the rifle-range still active. Then we passed down shadowy roads, with here and there a farm-house that seemed miles from anywhere, for this is a sparsely settled district. A gorgeous sunset was before us, and as the twilight came down like a slow curtain at the opera, we wondered why more people did not know about this fine road through the middle of the island, and use it instead of the more sociable thoroughfares that lead to town. We went by beautiful Artists' Lake, through Coram, Selden, and New Village, and I kept thinking that surely the next town must be our destination. It was getting chilly, and of course we had no coats, and our butcher did drive fast and was everlastingly chatty.

Finally I ventured to ask him how much farther we had to go, and he answered nonchalantly, "Oh, maybe eight or nine miles." But it seemed to us we must have traveled twenty, and it was getting on to half-past eight, and both of us were disgracefully hungry, when some straggling houses at length came in view. These, I thought with relief, must form the outskirts of humming little Smithtown. In a moment the electric signs of the movie-theaters would greet our eyes, and we would eat in a brilliantly lighted dining-room (I could visualize the typical American hotel), and then we would swiftly fall into a deep sleep, despite the fact that glittering signs winked in at us through our windows.

"Are we nearing your home town?" Ernest inquired.

"We 're in it," our butcher replied. Every goose was a swan to him. Instead of the roaring main street we had thought of, we found ourselves in what was virtually a pasture, with houses scattered all about us; and in a moment the hotel, around which I had imagined trolleys

would heave and dash, was before us—a calm somnolent frame building on a little knoll, with only one lamp in the window, and an innkeeper and his wife who welcomed us with true bucolic hospitality. We were overjoyed with the silence and the peace of it. Cobblestones? We found none in Smithtown; only soft, clean, winding streets and lovely trees and birds and flowers.

The country in this neighborhood is delightful, and one can ramble about it for miles and never grow weary of it. There are little hills and cozy turnings, waterfalls and sequestered farm-houses and larger estates, some of real magnificence.

Running through the middle of Long Island is the fascinating line of the Motor Parkway, built several years ago for the delight of the motorist who revels in high speed, and is happy only when he has the right of way. It begins just north of Floral Park, and leads direct to Lake Ronkonkoma, where the French restaurant called Petit Trianon has been for many seasons, a dream spot if ever there was one. The lucky motorist! How many places there are of mushroom growth

Smithtown

that are only for him! But coming for luncheon at this inn, he will be likely, being a speed fiend, to go back as he came, on the glistening Parkway, and miss the rustic beauties of the town of Ronkonkoma, where Maude Adams lives in seclusion during the summer. So, while he gains much, he also loses a great deal; and, while the king's highway is beautiful, like all things kingly it is lonesome; and save for an occasional toll-gate keeper one encounters few people on this level, gleaming stretch that runs like a long, smooth, brown-velvet ribbon beneath the wheels of one's car.

Though we missed the province between Wading River and Port Jefferson and Setauket at one time, we took the trail on another occasion, passing through such lovely villages as Shoreham, Rocky Point, and Miller's Place. The towns themselves, which are very popular as summer colonies, are not literally on the water, but some of them reach out to the Sound, and bathing pavilions, like jeweled fingers, touch the sandy shore. This has always been for me one of the

high spots of Long Island, perhaps because I can never forget a paradisial week I spent here several years ago at the lonely cottage of a friend, with only one servant to look after my needs. I recall sunrises of tropic beauty, and flaming sunsets that could not be matched even along the Mediterranean, and hours of such complete solitude that I completely erased the thundering city from my brain and existed only in a realm of dreams. There was one day of tapping rain, when a roaring fire was necessary, though it was summer then, too. For the remainder of that week I walked along miles of sun-smitten beach, as alone as the first man in the Garden of Eden, and never again do I expect such a sense of calm as came over me then.

CHAPTER IX

OYSTER BAY AND ROUNDABOUT ROSLYN

ONE thinks of Long Island as flat. So it is in many parts; but roundabout Roslyn, Oyster Bay, and Locust Valley, and even at the Westburys, Old and New, there are hills, if not mountains; and nature has been lavish in her gift of water, so that a house built on a rise of ground commands a fine view, with clean mirrors reflecting the sun and moon.

There are no end of by-ways here, and plenty of back roads to ride horseback. Often, in going to Huntington, where William Faversham has a home, I had looked from the train window as we came to Cold Spring Harbor, and determined one day to take that shadowy path leading from the station, so cool and fragrant did it seem. This is really one of Long Island's pleasantest localities. There is fashion, if you care for it, and country

simplicity rubbing elbows over the fences and hedges, if you want that.

The Piping Rock Club is here, with the house that Guy Lowell designed, a club-house with massive wooden pillars, and sensitively and sensibly conceived. A double polo-field sprawls directly in front of the wide porch, and beyond that the golf-links, among the most beautiful in America, meander away. At Fox's Point, a few miles down on the north shore, is the private bathing-beach for Piping Rock members, and the lanes that lead to it, for equestrians and motorists, are haunted, cool hallways, with canopies of green leaves and a soft carpet of earth. I do not know a prettier beach, or one where the water looks bluer and where, afar, the ships sail by so gracefully. In this region there are heavenly roads, and quaint thatched cottages, and neat hedges that make one think of rural England.

At fashionable Old Westbury there is the Meadowbrook Club, and polo is played here during the season by young men of stalwart frame. There are hunt meets, also, and the whole country-

Roslyn

side is forever alive with sport of one sort or another. The late Robert Bacon, once our ambassador to France, made his home at Old Westbury, and his widow and sons still live there. Otto Kahn has a splendid villa not far off; likewise J. P. Morgan. The locality is rich in historic interest.

Plandome, Manhasset, and Port Washington, particularly the latter, which is on Manhasset Bay, are charming spots in summer, and Sand's Point, jutting out into the Sound, is beautiful in an Old-World way. Great Neck is a hive of theatrical celebrities. Their motors dash in and out, and many an actor commutes all the year round from here, finding it no trouble at all to reach his theater in time.

Of course there are hundreds of little places on the south shore equally attractive. One thinks of Cedarhurst and Lawrence, prim with box hedges and barbered grass; and if one likes to mingle with the crowd, the first spot that comes to mind is Long Beach, with wheel-chairs and loud bands and jazz, and thousands upon thou-

sands of bathers seeking what will always seem to me a hollow form of pleasure in the thickly populated sea.

If for nothing else, Long Island would be famous for two things: it was at West Hills that Walt Whitman was born, and it is at Oyster Bay that Theodore Roosevelt is buried. Two of the greatest Americans we ever produced! From 1836 until 1839 Whitman published "The Long Islander" at Huntington, and later edited a daily paper in Brooklyn; and for years Roosevelt lived at Sagamore Hill, drinking in the wonder of the harbor beneath his old home, finding it a shelter in his unbelievably busy life. How many pilgrims came to see him there! No small town in the world is better known, and the pilgrims continue to come; but now, alas! to his final home on that hill in the village he loved and that loved him.

Alec and I were two of those pilgrims on a certain glorious summer day. Three thousand other folk had happened to choose that same morning for a like journey, and a few veterans of the

Spanish-American War had come to put a wreath on the grave of one of America's greatest men. I saw Charlie Lee, the colonel's former coachman, and later his chauffeur, sitting by the tomb—the simplest but most beautiful stone I have ever seen. There is nothing upon it but these words:

THEODORE ROOSEVELT
Born October 27, 1858
Died January 6, 1919
and his wife
EDITH KERMIT
Born August 6, 1861,
Died

A bronze wreath rests at the base of the stone, and upon this is engraved only this:

À
THEODORE ROOSEVELT
Hommage
de la
Côte d'Azur
l'Eclaireur de Nice

Nothing more! And nothing more is needed. The simplicity of greatness! Just as he would have it. And if ever a man who loved and was

willing to fight and die for democracy was buried democratically, it is T. R. An unpretentious, almost scraggly cemetery it is, with a plain white wooden arch for a gate—the sort of graveyard in which one would least expect to find the solemn tablet of a great man. At first I confess that it seemed to me too simple, too democratic, if such a thing can be; but after I had stood before that iron grating for a while, I found myself thinking that I would not have had Theodore Roosevelt buried anywhere else in the world. For this grave is a symbol of the true America, a voice, as it were, that calls from the soil perpetually, "I was one of you; I am still one of you, resting here on this quiet hill."

And indeed he is. No man, dead, was ever more eternally alive. Great-heart! "His soul goes marching on."

Hail, but not farewell, Theodore Roosevelt!

CHAPTER X

DINNER AMONG THE STARS

THAT summer night, having walked several miles from Oyster Bay and growing weary of our tramp, I had a sudden inspiration. We would take a train to Brooklyn—which, somehow, one always forgets is on Long Island—and dine at a certain roof-garden I knew there. Alec was just the companion for such a dinner, for he had never in his life been in Brooklyn, never on Long Island until he walked with me these few days, having only recently come from the Middle West. He was one of those who, through the comic papers, and from vaudeville teams, had come to look upon Brooklyn as nothing but a jest. Little did he dream, as little many a Manhattanite dreams, that in this really lovely annex of the metropolis is one of the most fascinating restaurants for miles about. And it is easily reached from any part of New York.

Cool as a ship's deck, which it was built to resemble, was this open room that seemed literally to rest among the stars. We gasped at the panorama spread beneath us and around us. A blood-red moon, like a huge Japanese lantern, hung in the heavens. As though we could touch them if we would, the sky-scrapers of Manhattan stood in gigantic rows, with the silver ribbon of the river at their feet. The bridges, like cobwebs or delicate lace—it was hard to realize they were thundering corridors of traffic, built of stern iron and steel—were just beginning to blossom with thousands of lights; and the stars, jealous of this lesser glory, came out of the black velvet of the sky in rapid battalions. Soon the night was a luminous globe, with ourselves in the center of it, amazed and appalled at the magnificence around us. This glowing world; was it a dream? White sails spread themselves on the water, and ferryboats, like tiny worms of flame, crawled into the purple wharves, slipping authentically where they belonged. Far down the bay shone one mystical star—the torch of the Statue of Lib-

erty; and Staten Island's home-lights began to twinkle and shine. A thin cloud would flash now and then over the face of the moon, which kept rising on the tide of the darkness, erased only momentarily from our vision, and then coming triumphantly forth again.

It was an evening almost too wonderful to be true. Vaguely we heard the band behind us—soft, insinuating music that rose and fell—stringed instruments and the swish of dancing feet.

But it was the city on the other side of the river that held us—that would always hold us. As though in a dream we watched it, etched against a tapestry, silent in its brutal strength, pitiless perhaps, but kind, too, as a great lioness is kind to her brood. Never can one be wholly free from the power and lure of Manhattan.

In every sky-scraper a multitude of lights gleamed, until finally these turrets of flame were like Babylon on fire. Was this a modern city? Oh, wonderful beyond all naming were the architects who had conceived this terrible town by the

sea, this seeming tumult of towers and ascending steel!

Who wrought these granite ghosts saw more than we
May ever see. He saw pale, tenuous lines
On some age-mellowed shore where cities rose
Proudly as Corinth or imperial Rome;
He saw, through mists of vision, Bagdad leap
To immaterial being, and he sought
To snatch one curve from her elusive domes;
He saw lost Nineveh and Babylon,
And Tyre, and all the golden dreams of Greece,
Columns and fanes that cannot be rebuilt.
These are the shadows of far nobler walls,
The wraiths of ancient pomp and glittering days,
Set here by master minds and master souls,
Almost as wonderful as mountains are,
Mysterious as the petals of a flower.